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ABSTRACT

School-based management (SBM), sometimes called site-based management, is fast becoming the hottest restructuring item in the arsenal of reformers, teachers' unions, governors, and legislators who want to change the traditional ways in which schools and school districts do business. This document comprises three main sections with contributions from 12 authors. The first section is entitled "Theory of School-Based Management" and covers what the research says, practical strategies for school administrators, the power of school-based leadership, implementation of SBM, and a checklist of things to consider. The second part is entitled "The Nuts and Bolts of School-Based Management." Topics include creating a vision and mission statement, synergistic curriculum design, site-based strategic planning, and site-based communications. The final part is entitled "Theory into Practice." Action plans, instructional leadership teams, the principal as leader, delegation, assistant principals' responsibility, identification of variables that affect schools, strategies for faculty involvement, and decentralized school-site budgeting are the topics covered. References are appended to each part. (RR)

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School-Based Management

Theory and Practice

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Introduction to School-Based Management

By Jerry J. Herman

School-based management—sometimes called site-based management—is fast becoming the hottest restructuring item in the arsenal of reformers, teachers' unions, governors, and legislators who want to change the traditional ways schools and school districts do business. Many state legislatures have passed, or are seriously considering passing, legislation mandating some form of school-based management.

School-based management is an idea whose time has come, and all we need to do to assist in the transition is to:

- Clearly define what we mean by school-based management. This definition may vary from district to district.
- Decide who is to have what degree of decision-making power in such areas as budget, personnel, curriculum and governance policies and procedures
- Smoothly make the transition from a top-down bureaucratic school district governance culture to one that provides an opportunity for much greater decision-making power at the level where the students are taught—in the school building.

A Philosophical Base

The research on effective schools, Theory Z, Theories X and Y, motivators and hygiene factors, hierarchy of needs, effective principals, exchange theory, and empowerment all form a base for a philosophy of school-based management. Combined, they lead to a pragmatic philosophy that includes the following beliefs and values:

- Teachers, principals, and others who work closest to the product (educated and productive students) are in the best position to know and improve education at the school building level.
- Those who believe ALL students can learn must be given decision-making authority to implement the delivery system that will produce the desired learnings.
- Principals must be instructional leaders and must support the teachers by motivating them and by gathering the resources required.
- School district and local school building policies and rules work best when they support processes and structures like school-based management.
- High expectations for achievement of defined goals and objectives for both students and employees are best stressed at the school level for maximum success.
- People want interesting work, they want to be part of the decision-making group, they want to achieve, they want to assist others to achieve, and they want recognition and a collaborative culture in which to work. These can best be achieved by focusing on the individual school.
- When school employees are provided the authority to make meaningful decisions, they are also accountable for the results of those decisions. *Quality assurance* is a key to a good accountability monitoring structure.

Once we understand the theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of school-based management, we can turn to clarifying a definition of the term. Each school district's and each school building's decisionmakers must clearly define what they mean by school-based management prior to beginning the processes and structures to implement it.

Definition of School-Based Management

There is no universal definition for school-based management. I do, however, know that school-based management:

- Is *not* a quick fix.
- Is a process with an implementing structure.
- Can involve a wide variety of stakeholders, or can be limited to a couple of employee representative categories.
- May include decision power and authority related to the areas of budget, personnel, instruc-

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tion, policy, and a variety of governance issues; or it may allow a very narrow scope of decision-making power to exist at the school level.

- Can allow many decisions to be made at the school level, or can allow the building's decisionmakers to work with district level personnel.
- Should place accountability for decisions at the location at which the decisions are made and with the persons given the authority to make those decisions.
- Definitely should demand *quality assurance* from those who make the decisions.

Considering all these elements, I believe a useful definition of school-based management is:

> ***School-Based Management is a structure and a process* that allows greater building level decision making related to some or all the areas of instruction, personnel, budget, policy, and other matters pertinent to local school building governance; *and* it is a process that *involves* a variety of *stakeholders* in decisions related to the local, individual school.**

Now that we have defined the term school-based management, let's discuss some of the major considerations to be addressed *before* implementation of the school-based management structure and process. If we jump too quickly into the restructuring waters, sometimes we drown. Contemplating the key considerations before jumping into the school-based management pool is good protection against unnecessary hurt.

Major Considerations To Address Before Implementation

At best, change is difficult, and comprehensive change such as that required to implement and maintain school-based management involves modifying the entire organizational culture of a school district and its sub-system school buildings. It involves developing new standard operating procedures (SOPs), and it involves eliminating some traditional ways of operating and planning. Thus, it is crucial that much thought be given prior to implementing a voluntary school-based management structure and process.

If, however, this process is mandated by a state's legislature or by a local school district's board of education, it is still very important to consider, in advance, the best strategies and tactics to utilize when implementing this changed way of doing school business. Local school building's and the local school district's decision-makers will do everyone a favor if they attend to the following prior to entering school-based management.

- Change from a traditional top-down to a school-based management style is not a *quick fix*. It is, rather, a long-term evolutionary process that will ultimately change the organization's culture and its SOPs. Therefore, a strategic planning process and structure should be put in place and the format for it agreed upon "a priori."
- Agreement is needed regarding which stakeholders (teachers, classified employees, parents, students, community members, business and industrial representatives, representatives of non-school governmental agencies, building level administrators and others decided upon by the local district) are to be involved in making decisions related to the local school.
- It must be clear who will be involved in the various types of decisions to be made. An agreement has to be reached as to which decisions affecting the local school building are to be made at the building level, which are to be made at the district level, and which are to be joint decisions made between the district level and the building level decisionmakers.
- A careful analysis of the human, temporal, and financial resources that are required to successfully implement a school-based management structure and process is crucial prior to a commitment for implementation.
- All participants must understand that this is to be an *evolutionary*, not a revolutionary process and that adjustments and modifications will have to be made as this evolutionary process proceeds.
- A positive, clear, and continuous communication system must be decided upon and put in place immediately, and this communication system must relate well to all of the various internal and external publics.

Now that we have explored some of the "a priori" major considerations, let's turn to the concerns of school district employees who are thrust into this school-based planning structure and process for the first time.

Ultimately, the success or failure of school-based management is directly correlated with the attitude of the employees who are responsible for implementing it. If they see school-based management as a means of improving the education of students and organizational climate and as a positive challenge, school-based management will ultimately succeed. If, however, they see school-based management, especially if it mandated by the legislature or the local school board, as something that is undesirable, more work, and a way

of making them more accountable for decisions for which they feel they should not be held accountable, school-based management will fail. Attention to the human needs is the *most important* of all variables to which decisionmakers should attend.

Assuming that we have developed a positive ownership attitude among the school's employees, the decisionmakers can turn to the planning requirements that will lead to successful implementation.

Planning and Training for Success

To make school-based management successful, the decisionmakers must put in place long-term strategies, tactics, and yearly operational plans. This planning, which should include input from all categories of stakeholders, should follow a sequence such as the following.

- Reach a consensus *agreement on the beliefs and values* that will guide the planning.
- *Scan the external environment* to determine trends (demographic, economic, political, and other factors) that may affect the planning decisions.
- *Scan the internal environment* to determine trends (student achievement test scores, employee and student attitudes, dropout rates, and other important variables) that may affect the planning decisions.
- Determine those four to six *CSFs (Critical Success Factors)* that become the primary focal points for planning and communications.
- Establish a *vision* of "what should be" at some future time.
- Develop a one-sentence, focused *mission* statement.
- Complete a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis for both the external and internal environments. Utilize the strengths and opportunities to promote the vision and mission, work to eliminate or improve the weaknesses, and develop tactics to eliminate or minimize the impact of the threats.
- Establish strategic *goals*.
- Develop specific, detailed, and *measurable objectives* for each strategic goal.
- Agree upon a *priority decision-making structure* if there are too many goals or too many objectives to be successfully handled over the time period. Is it meaningful? Is it affordable? Is it measurable? Does it have a high chance of succeeding?
- Establish detailed year-to-year *action plans* for each objective pursued. These action plans should include specific answers to the following: What tasks are to be completed? What is the chronological order for the completion of these tasks? Who is responsible for completing each task? When is each task to be completed? What resources are necessary to complete each task? How is the level of achievement to be measured?

A training or staff development system must be established to assist those employees and other participants who are not used to school-based management or who do not possess the necessary specific knowledge and skills required to successfully implement school-based management. We shall now turn to a brief discussion of these training *needs* (gaps between "what is" and "what should be").

Not only do those planning for school-based management have to clearly define what the term means to the local school district's stakeholders and have thought through the major "a priori" considerations, but they must also be clear about the training requirements related to successfully implementing school-based management. Obviously, input should be sought from all stakeholders to determine the specific types of training needs required. In all probability, the major training needs identified will include training in:

1. Verbal and non-verbal communications
2. Planning methodologies
3. The development of a vision, a mission statement, and action plans
4. The development of policies and standard operating procedures to implement school-based management
5. Leadership and followership
6. Defining results that are desired and the means of measuring the degree of achievement for these desired results
7. Being change agents
8. Collaborative planning
9. Other skills as required and as identified by those participating in the school-based management process and structure.

Benefits of School-Based Management

If done well, school-based management should result in the following:

- The productivity of the students and employees should increase
- The organizational climate should improve
- Community support should increase
- The organization should be results-oriented rather than means-oriented

- The culture should be one of contentment, efficiency, and effectiveness; and the planning and standard operating procedures should be in place to continue and further enhance this culture
- Strategic and operational planning are considered crucial, and there is constant monitoring, evaluation, and feedback to each planning group, whether they deal with strategic or operational plans
- Stakeholders have input, and they feel ownership for the vision, mission, and products.

If you want to focus on the individual school as the primary decision base because that is where the students are taught and that is where research concludes that educational improvements must take place to be successful, and if you feel that you and others like you are the best persons to make the necessary decisions, and if you are willing to become accountable change agents for the benefit of students and employees, buy into school-based management. It is a rare opportunity to do a lot of necessary good for people—if you do it well.

Theory of School-Based Management

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An Overview of School-Based Management: What Does the Research Say?

By Paula A. White

School-based management (SBM) has become an important issue in educational policy. The term refers to a program or philosophy adopted by schools or school districts to improve education by increasing the autonomy of the school staff to make school site decisions.

Much ambiguity surrounds the notion of SBM. Researchers, practitioners, and policymakers interpret SBM differently, and there are numerous variations within districts and schools regarding the levels of authority, the actors involved, and the areas of control. While decentralization is a broad concept that refers to the delegation of decision-making authority to subunits, SBM is a system of decentralization in which authority over school policy is shared by the central office and the school site.

Objectives of School-Based Management

The impetus for SBM may come from superintendents, school boards, or school personnel. While it is most common for SBM districts to allocate greater decision-making authority to principals, school districts that have initiated SBM programs or incorporated SBM philosophies have also emphasized increased authority of teachers, students, parents, and community members (Clune and White, 1988; Pierce, 1980).

For example, New York City's 1985 school improvement plan has focused on community participation in school decision making; the ABC School District in Cerritos, Calif., initiated a plan in 1976 that focuses on teacher empowerment; and Hammond, Ind., since 1985, has implemented a school improvement program that includes the active involvement of teachers, students, parents, and other community members (Casner-Lotto, 1988; Kelly, 1988; Sickler, 1988).

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How widespread is SBM? There is no exact figure. However, more than 100 school districts across the country have experimented with aspects of SBM (White, 1988). In California alone, more than 60 districts are managed under a philosophy of shared decision making or have incorporated SBM programs (Decker et al., 1977). Other states such as Florida, Minnesota, and New York have numerous school districts that are actively involved in initiating SBM programs (Clune and White, 1988).

SBM is not a new idea. Similar movements were initiated in the '60s and '70s. For example, New York City began a citywide decentralization program in 1967, and Detroit adopted a decentralization plan in 1970 (Fantini and Gittell, 1973).

Critics have asked, "If past efforts to decentralize have not been successful, why should SBM succeed?" Supporters of SBM believe that the current movement is different. Previous attempts to decentralize were aimed at shifting authority from a large, central board of education to smaller, local boards.

Advocates of SBM argue that these efforts served merely to reorganize administrative responsibilities by replacing one form of bureaucracy with another. Past reforms avoided a transfer of power to the school site. As Fantini and Gittell (1973) suggest, in reference to the 1967 New York City decentralization plan, the efforts "essentially preserved the status quo."

SBM is different from past decentralization efforts because it changes the entire system of district and school organization and restructures most roles in the district (David, Purkey, and White, 1988). The purpose of SBM is not simply to reorganize administrative responsibilities, but to make changes in traditional structures of authority, with new relationships among teachers, administrators, parents, and students.

Support for SBM comes from state and local policymakers, teachers, administrators, and school board members who believe that the closer a decision is made to a student served by the decision, the better it will serve the student. National groups such as the American Federation of Teachers, the National Education Association, and the National Governors' Association have called

for increased flexibility at the school site and a limit on state regulations that interfere with local autonomy. The ultimate goal of SBM is to improve the teaching and learning environment for students.

Decentralization of Decisions

Budget, curriculum, and staffing decisions are three areas of decision making most commonly decentralized under SBM. School site budgeting allows principals, in consultation with teachers and community representatives, to allocate funds across a variety of budget categories according to priorities established at the school level. Proponents of SBM argue that school personnel are better able to meet the needs of students by purchasing instructional supplies and equipment designed for students' specific learning needs (Gideonse, Holm, and Westheimer, 1981; Pierce, 1978).

School-site curriculum development enables school staff to develop the instructional program, to select instructional materials and textbooks, and to design inservice training programs. By allocating individuals at the school site greater discretion over curriculum development, school staff select instructional materials and methods and develop curricula that are most appropriate to the needs of their students (Knight, 1984).

Participation in staffing decisions allows principals, teachers, and other school staff to determine the distribution of full-time and part-time positions, and the number of regular teacher, lead teacher, and teacher aide positions. School staff are allowed to make tradeoffs among instructional aides, vice principals, counselors, and janitors (Marschak and Thomason, 1976).

Advocates of SBM argue that if school personnel are involved in making hiring decisions, they will select like-minded staff that reflect their own values, goals, and objectives (Pierce, 1978; Rosenholtz, 1985). This selection process enables school staff to hire specialists and aides with qualifications specific to students' needs.

Increased community participation is often a central objective of SBM. The formation of school site councils engages community members, in cooperation with the principal, teachers, and occasionally students, in shared decision making regarding school issues. The selection, composition, and responsibilities of the council vary from district to district and from school to school. Members volunteer or are elected to be on the council.

School site councils are involved in activities such as interviewing and recommending candidates for staff positions, establishing school priorities, making school budget recommendations, and assessing the effectiveness of school programs (Lindelow, 1981; Marburger, 1985). By improving communication and understanding between the school and community, the school site council creates a better learning environment for students.

In a system of SBM, individual schools and school districts determine the personnel responsible for particular decisions and the degree to which budget, curriculum, and hiring decisions will be decentralized. Decisions made by individuals at the school site are subject to review by higher administrators, including the school board and superintendent (Parker, 1979; Pierce, 1980).

Benefits of School-Based Management

SBM promises greater flexibility, increased participation of school staff in school decisions, and the ability to provide more appropriate services to meet the specific needs of students. There is some evidence that SBM is related to student achievement. The school effectiveness literature supports the need for school personnel to play an important role in school decision making to increase the academic performance of students (Purkey and Smith, 1983).

Levin (1988) suggests that school site decision making is related to student learning and achievement. However, the direct relationship is not clear. It is difficult to draw a cause and effect relationship between SBM and student achievement since any impact of SBM is complicated by other trends at the school site, or at the local, state, and national level.

In addition to improved learning and academic achievement, there are other benefits of SBM. Increased authority at the school site may improve self-esteem, morale, and efficiency of school personnel. The greater standardization of schooling, centralization, and top-down controls have added to the declining morale of school personnel (Duke, Showers, and Imber, 1980; Pierce, 1980). Increased discretion over decision making provides incentives for school staff to be more efficient.

As Rosenholtz (1987) has suggested, autonomy enhances performance:

> Jobs that give people autonomy and discretion require that they exercise judgment and choice; in doing so, they become aware of themselves as causal agents in their own performance. Loss of the capacity to control the terms of work or to determine what work is to be done, how the work is to be done, or what its aim is to be, widens the gap between the knowledge of one's unique contributions to work and any performance efficacy that can be derived from it (p. 540).

SBM improves communication among school staff and the community. Participation in school

budget, curriculum, and staffing decisions gives school personnel the opportunity collectively to develop ideas about what is important to emphasize in teaching. According to Little (1981), the most successful schools appear to be those where school staff members frequently exchange ideas about teaching. SBM opens up communication between parents, teachers, and students, and improves educational services by giving them a larger voice in educational decisions.

Increased authority at the school site may help to attract and retain quality staff. Poor teacher working conditions, including low status and low pay, have made it increasingly difficult to attract bright students to the teaching profession (McNeil, 1987; Nyberg and Farber, 1986). By providing increased discretion and autonomy of objectives to teachers, the role of the teacher may gain increased respect and raise teachers' interest and motivation in teaching.

Limitations of School-Based Management

Many problems may arise in implementing SBM. It may create confusion in roles and responsibilities. It may be difficult for teachers, administrators, parents, and students to adapt to new roles, and they may become frustrated if they do not know what is expected of them (Decker et al., 1977). For example, principals may not know which decisions must be made in consultation with teachers and which they should make on their own.

SBM represents a power struggle among administrators, teachers, parents, and students. There are contradictions among central administrators who endorse the philosophy of SBM but find it difficult to allocate decision-making authority to principals; principals who want more control over their own destiny but are resistant to change; and teachers, parents, and students who want greater ownership over objectives but do not have the time to spend away from the classroom, their jobs, their family, or their hobbies to develop curricula, make budget recommendations, or interview personnel.

SBM encourages administrators, parents, and school staff to work together on school policy issues. However, it is not necessarily a case of these individuals struggling collectively to obtain greater authority. For example, teachers may fear that greater parental authority will interfere with their own power, goals, and objectives.

Many authors speak of the problems in reaching a balance between centralization and decentralization (Brooke, 1984; Decker et al., 1977). It is neither practical nor feasible for a district to develop a fully centralized or decentralized system of school management. There is a problem in providing too much school-based management freedom for school staff and risking confusion and inconsistency, versus the problem of providing too little freedom and facing a staff that feels restrained or inefficient (Rosenholtz, 1985).

According to Beaubier and Thayer (1973), "As contrary as it may seem, it is absolutely essential to centralize some aspects of a district's operations for successful decentralization of the operating unit" (p. 20).

Problems in implementing SBM may arise from the structure of school organization and the nesting of individual schools with a series of larger organizations, such as conflicting state mandates, standardized curricula, and budget and personnel constraints at the district and state level (Duke, Showers, and Imber, 1980; Prasch, 1984).

Increased involvement of school staff and community members in school policy decisions may conflict with state mandates prescribing curriculum form and content (Darling-Hammond and Berry, 1988). For example, Florida has imposed legislative action regarding curriculum standardization and some districts with SBM programs have requested special status to diverge from state requirements (National School Boards Association, 1988).

Although SBM may increase the authority of school personnel regarding budget issues, decisions regarding instructional salaries, the number of teachers, and instructional materials and equipment will be limited by the amount of resources available (Gideonse, Holm, and Westheimer, 1981). In addition, hiring decisions will be limited by enrollment trends, district agreements with teacher unions, and state teacher-student ratio requirements (Johnson, 1987).

SBM raises potential conflicts with collective bargaining, for example, by allocating administrative responsibilities to teachers and engaging school staff in decisions that might normally be established by union contracts. As Johnson (1984) suggests, collective bargaining often results in standardization of procedures. SBM, on the other hand, often leads to diversity and differentiation in procedures, from school to school. While teachers' unions have traditionally emphasized material incentives such as pay raises and benefits, SBM emphasizes ownership over objectives such as what is taught and what materials are used.

SBM advocates do not believe SBM runs counter to union strategies. In most instances, teachers' unions have not served as obstacles to the implementation of SBM. In school districts such as Dade County, Fla., and Hammond, Ind., the unions have worked cooperatively with the district to obtain SBM (National School Boards Association, 1988). In districts where union leaders have played an important role in the initiation and implementation of SBM, the unions believe that SBM offers a method to move beyond tradi-

tional collective bargaining strategies and to acquire the status and autonomy desired by teachers (Casner-Lotto, 1988; David, 1988; McDonnell and Pascal, 1988).

Finally, there is a limit to what SBM can do. Although many policymakers advocate the decentralization of authority to the school site, most supporters recognize that SBM alone will not solve all school problems such as low teacher salaries, poorly trained teachers, discipline problems, or societal tensions. Researchers argue that major changes in school effectiveness cannot occur unless educational reforms move beyond a narrow focus on the schools (Carnoy and Levin, 1976).

A Recipe for SBM

An important aspect of SBM is its diverse approach to decentralization of various decisions to a variety of key actors. Supporters of SBM warn against assuming there is "one best way," but rather advocate giving individuals at the school site the ability to tailor educational programs to meet specific student needs. The diversity that SBM espouses is at the risk of promising all things to all people, without providing a set of guidelines to achieve an effective SBM program. Proponents of SBM contend that it is the increased flexibility that SBM offers which enables school personnel to make better decisions and improve school learning.

There is not a simple blueprint for SBM. A successful SBM program in one school district cannot be copied wholesale and transferred to another district. From past and present experiences, however, researchers have identified several essential ingredients in initiating SBM (Lindelow, 1981; Marburger, 1985; Parker, 1979):

- *Training.* All levels of staff must be trained. SBM establishes new lines of communication between administrators and teachers, professionals and nonprofessionals, and school staff and school board members. Without proper training, administrators, parents, students, and school staff may find it difficult to meet new responsibilities and adjust to new roles.
- *A gradual transition.* SBM cannot be initiated overnight. Districts with successful SBM programs refer to the gradual transition process that limited implementation problems.
- *Financial support.* It is not necessarily more expensive for a district to operate under a system of SBM; however, to make a difference, school staff must have flexibility over the use of funds. While some districts have found that SBM may even assist in cutting costs through more efficient use of funds, SBM cannot operate without financial support to develop curricula and to provide training and released time for school staff to meet.
- *Shared goals.* Researchers and practitioners often speak of the school district's need for shared goals or a shared vision. Without a shared idea as to what districts or schools aim to accomplish through SBM, it is difficult to evaluate its effectiveness. The participation of students, teachers, principals, and community members in the development of school goals will strengthen their commitment to them.
- *Administrators willing to share authority.* If SBM is to work, administrators must allocate authority to principals, and principals must be willing to allocate authority to teachers, parents, and students.
- *Support from the school community.* Scholars argue that SBM cannot be imposed on schools, but rather must acquire the support of the entire school community.

The Prospects for School-Based Management

Reformers ask: Is SBM working? Is it something every district will want to initiate? To supporters, it is only logical that those who are most affected by decisions such as curriculum development, textbook selection, staffing structure, and allocation of school resources should have a voice in making those decisions. However, the extent to which principals, teachers, students, parents, and community members should be involved, and the extent to which central administrators should retain authority, is not resolved.

We need systematic comparisons of the allocation of authority to different actors. We also need research on the most effective methods of training for new roles and the degree of school improvement after the implementation of SBM. Only by reviewing, renewing, and testing alternative models will we know the real potentials of SBM.

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School-Based Management: Practical Strategies for School Administrators

By Robert Collins, with Nancy Fisher

School-based management (SBM), the decentralization of decision and policy-making authority from boards of education to the local school community, portends significant changes in educational institutions. These changes, positive as they are for education in general and students in particular, also raise the anxiety levels of school administrators as teachers and parents are empowered and the role of the school administrator changes.

For decades, most schools had structures for teacher, parent, and community input. While successful administrators utilized this "input" when making decisions, they retained full authority for making the final decision.

At this point, the traditional authority of the principal is shared, and consequently, a new range of behaviors and strategies is necessary for principals and co-administrators to develop and utilize collaborative processes. Practical strategies and new perspectives concerning school management will guide principals in understanding and developing SBM programs as the structures and power bases of school change.

Good administrators have always utilized collaborative decision-making processes, recognizing both the expertise and leadership that faculty members, parents, and community members provide. Policy and procedural decisions in well-run schools are made in cooperation with the total school community to ensure that not only the best information, creativity, and ideas are surfaced, but also to create an atmosphere of ownership and responsibility for those decisions.

While SBM redefines the role of administrators and teachers and changes the structure in which decisions are made, it does not change the personal and professional skills that have always characterized successful administrators.

School-based management strategies can be divided into two categories:

- Considerations for site administrators prior to the development of SBM guidelines by districts and the actual writing of an SBM program
- Strategies that deal with the decision to write an SBM program for the school and the concerns related to the local school plan.

The following issues identify important administrative behaviors and strategies for working with SBM programs.

Practical Strategies and New Perspectives

1. **Sharing the instructional leadership of the school.**

Administrators have always been viewed as the instructional leaders of the school. SBM does not change that role, except that the concept of multiple leadership of the instructional program by administrators, teachers, and parents is established. Principals may be concerned that SBM also means teacher and/or parent control of the school's decision-making processes. Administrators must remember that SBM is a shared process, with principals now playing the role of a "leader of leaders."

Within this context, the essence of administrative leadership is to stimulate, organize, and facilitate teacher and parent leadership, ensuring the success of the collaborative process. At the same time, the need for initiative, creativity, and organization by the site administrator is not diminished.

Teachers and administrators have often secretly wondered what exciting programs and strategies for student achievement could be developed if as a school team we had greater decision-making authority, not constrained by board of education policies or even the state education codes. With SBM, the leadership of the school team can be a reality, not simply a wish.

Within this new perspective, SBM will actually increase the scope and authority of the principal, teachers, and parents by increasing the decision and policy making at the school. Administrators must understand they would lose their leadership roles only if they abdicated them in the develop-

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ment and implementation of SBM because of their own fears of change and the new demands of collaborative leadership.

2. Becoming knowledgeable regarding school-based management.

The concept of SBM cannot be easily understood during a lunchtime conversation or through a single presentation during a meeting. A great deal of information currently exists concerning SBM. It is the responsibility of a site administrator to familiarize himself or herself with the available SBM literature and research.

Research, as well, should include more than the philosophical approach and theory of SBM; it should also involve researching current SBM models and administrative experiences in active SBM programs. Such research will help clearly define SBM roles, identify the wide diversity of SBM programs, and outline successful administrative strategies. A knowledgeable administrator is an effective SBM leader.

At the same time, "becoming knowledgeable regarding SBM" is a shared responsibility for each member of the school planning team. Administrators must involve the total school community in this learning process.

3. Understanding that co-administrators continue to play a vital role in SBM programs.

Often, principals become involved in the research and developmental processes of SBM with teachers, parents, members of the board of education, and, in the process, leave co-administrators out.

Principals must ensure that the entire administrative team is part of the SBM program and its development. This includes attention to the following:

- Ensuring that the roles of all co-administrators are clearly understood by teachers and parents. If teachers and parents do not clearly understand these roles, they may see these positions as expendable as SBM programs are developed.
- Ensuring that the roles of co-administrators will be clearly defined in the SBM programs that are written. School restructuring under SBM will not eliminate the many administrative tasks necessary to make a school run effectively. In fact, SBM will probably increase administrative tasks and responsibilities. The administrative team provides this leadership now and will continue to do so under SBM.

4. Identifying student achievement as the primary goal of SBM.

Often the rhetoric of SBM—"teacher empowerment and community/teacher control"—predisposes debates of governance issues. Unfortunately, communities, faculties, and administrators become mired in conflicts over the powers of the council at the local site, as well as the powers of that council's individual component groups. In these debates, the ultimate goal of SBM—student achievement—is forgotten.

It is the responsibility of the school administrators and teacher leaders to ensure that student achievement is clearly identified as the goal of SBM programs at both the school and district levels. Student achievement then becomes the reference point for all aspects of the developmental process, directing the total school energies into the true mission of the school.

5. Taking a leadership role in the development of district policy concerning school-based management.

School boards develop the initial policies concerning SBM programs and the procedures for writing an SBM program at the school site. These policies and procedures are developed with varying degrees of participation and input from teacher organizations, parent groups, and administrative groups.

School administrators must collaborate with superintendents and the board of education to develop district procedures and policies of SBM. This role must include all aspects of the development, application procedures, and implementation of SBM programs at the school.

Principals must understand the significance of the district's development of the initial policies and procedures for SBM. This process may also redefine the role of school administrators as those who work collaboratively with the school board and superintendent to develop district policy and a variety of other issues.

School administrators should also pay particular attention to their role in the development and approval of the initial school SBM plan. Principal organizations must insist on school administrator approval, along with parent and teacher concurrence, as part of the application procedures of the school SBM program.

6. Putting to rest the question of accountability under SBM.

The question of who is responsible is often raised as a major concern of school administrators contemplating an SBM program. "Am I to be held accountable for decisions made by teachers and parents on a local school governance council—particularly decisions I may not agree with?"

Ultimately, the principal is accountable for his or her school and the decisions of the local school SBM council. That accountability will not only be demanded by the superintendent and the board of education, but will also be mirrored in the media and teacher/parent opinion.

Administrators must accept this reality; they are accountable for their school, its goals, and

student achievement. In fact, if school administrators are not held accountable, the role, authority, and leadership of the principal are significantly diminished.

In most instances, teachers and parents judge site administrators' accountability for errors in judgment or failed programs in direct proportion to their own participation in the decision-making process. It is unlikely that many superintendents or school board members will negatively evaluate administrators whose decisions reflect the very best thinking of the teachers, parents, community, and administrative leadership of the community. This is true even without SBM; administrators who utilize collaborative processes make better decisions than those whose decisions reflect their own narrow educational perspectives.

7. Playing a role in the development and implementation of a district SBM training program for the school.

Before the school decides to develop an SBM program, a districtwide training program for all components of the school is necessary. Such a program brings together all elements of the school community to discuss and explore their readiness for SBM and to define SBM as a process.

District training processes must identify for parents and teachers the management procedures and programs for schools including budgets, state and district policies, and the roles of co-administrators. Principals must ensure that their role in the training process is clearly defined and that they play a leadership role in that process.

Training should not be left to district personnel, teacher representatives, or the board of education alone. If school administrators are not active participants in this process, they will negate their leadership role at both the district and school levels.

Each of the above strategies and new perspectives reinforces the concepts of strong and effective leadership by the principal as vital to the success of SBM programs—leadership that must be in place prior to the consideration of developing SBM programs by the board of education. Such strategies underscore the importance of the principal as an instructional leader who shares the role with both teachers and parent leaders of the school.

Also clearly identified is the principal's accountability for the school program and decisions of the local SBM council. At the same time, school administrators' participation in the initial development of SBM procedures by the board of education should ensure that the parameters of SBM policies and procedures will guarantee the role of the site administrator and his or her approval of any local school program.

School administrators must understand their role in SBM before it becomes a reality in their district; it is then that school administrators can provide effective leadership in developing an SBM program at their schools.

Strategies and Perspectives for Developing an SBM Program

Once the district structure for SBM is established—with the participation of site administrators—principals, teachers, and community members decide whether or not they wish to write an SBM plan. Some of the issues that will be brought under consideration are:

1. Identifying the readiness of the school/community for school-based management.

Before a school can realistically write an SBM program, principals, teachers, and parents must evaluate the readiness of the school, staff members, and themselves for SBM. The leadership of the principal and school team is critical as schools investigate their own readiness for SBM by exploring the following issues:

- Is there an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect among teachers, parents, and staff members?
- Are teachers, parents, and administrators willing to commit themselves to the countless extra, unpaid hours that SBM programs require?
- Has the school had positive experiences with collaborative decision making that would portend success in SBM?
- Is there a genuine commitment to developing an SBM program to enhance student achievement, or are other issues the driving forces behind SBM at the school?
- Are school administrators comfortable in redefining their own leadership roles in SBM?
- Am I as a school administrator comfortable with the leadership style and skills necessary in SBM?

Principals, teachers, and parents must evaluate each of these six questions openly and honestly with both the faculty and the community members. If the answer to any of the questions is "no," principals and school teams must not enter into an SBM program at that time. Rather, they should simply work toward readiness for SBM.

2. Involving parents and classified staff members in the process.

In many instances, administrators and teachers have an excellent working relationship and are ready to move forward with an SBM program that they know will improve student achievement. With their experience and expertise, teachers and administrators already know a

great deal about how and why schools work and students learn. As a result, parents and classified staff members (secretaries, custodians, etc.) feel isolated and left out of the decision-making process. Principals and teachers must ensure that all components of the school team are trained in SBM, fully informed, and incorporated meaningfully into the decision-making process.

3. Ensuring that all members of the school community are aware of and understand the management processes and roles at the school site.

Effective principals and schools are those whose communities and faculties are well-informed. Issues that include budgets, discipline policies, district and state education codes, staffing, master scheduling, etc., are clearly understood by and open to everyone, and information is easily accessible. In addition, individual administrative roles must be clearly understood.

By understanding the management processes of a school, the school/community can objectively write an SBM proposal. More important, an informed faculty and community will be a positive support factor for principals as everyone realizes the limitations and constraints on the development of local school programs and policies.

To ensure success, the principal must make sure the management processes of the school are understood by and accessible to all leaders of the school council.

4. Actively addressing the issue of governance.

Site administrators often become concerned about the "numbers game," worrying that they can easily be outvoted by both teachers and parent members of the school council. The next concern is that the effectiveness of the site administrator will be significantly reduced as a result of the greater numbers of teacher/parent leaders.

The reality of school administration, though, is that teachers and parents have always outnumbered administrators. It is an unwise principal who does not recognize this and who makes decisions that do not reflect the interests and directions of the community and faculty members.

Conversely, faculty members and parents must be sensitive to the management concerns of administrative staffs. Governance is a collaborative process recognizing the partnership of administrators, faculties, communities, and parents. To ensure the successful operation of this process, principals and school teams may wish to evaluate each of the following issues:

- Should the principal have veto power over council decisions? One may argue that a principal's veto would ensure collaborative decision making, as the veto would be another check on the decision-making processes of the school council. Teacher empowerment should not be confused with teacher control, and the same would be true for parents and administrators within the collaborative decision-making structure.
- Should consensus be the basis for decision making by the council? While voting on each and every issue may result in decisions being made more efficiently, it may also result in issues not being fully discussed and the interests of many different leadership groups within the council not having their points of view properly represented in a final decision.

The principal must play a role—along with parents and teachers—in the approval of the initial SBM program for the school site. Within this context, issues regarding the possible veto power of the principal and decision making by consensus can be resolved collaboratively by school teams. More important, principals must remember that governance issues can mire a school plan prior to its inception; therefore, the issues must be clearly discussed by all members of the school council if a decision is to reflect the interests of all members of the school community. Such a decision ensures a shared role in governance for all school leaders.

5. Ensuring the role of co-administrators is included in the SBM proposal.

As the SBM plan identifies programs and policies that address student achievement, curriculum, discipline, attendance, etc., it is important to recognize the role of co-administrators in their respective areas of responsibility. That role should be identified in the SBM proposal. Not recognizing the role of co-administrators can undermine their overall role as part of the school administrative team.

6. Understanding and explaining the language of the SBM proposal.

Principals and school leadership teams must ensure that the wording of the school-based management proposal is clear and understood by everyone.

Remember that the SBM proposal is a legal document and is subject to interpretation. For example, when the decision is made to include in the powers of the SBM council the authority to make decisions regarding schedules, administrators may be thinking about bell schedules and activity schedules, teachers may be thinking about having control of the master teaching schedule and teaching assignments, while parents may be considering the dates for the start and end of the school year.

Every word in a school-based management proposal is important, and we need to continually ask ourselves what is meant by a particular word or phrase.

- Does the right "to review" mean the right to approve?
- What is an "activity," "schedule," or "budget"?
- What does "participate" mean?

Principals as well as teacher and parent leaders must be certain that ambiguities are eliminated as each element of the SBM plan is written, or more time will be spent on determining "what we meant" than on implementing the program. Principals who have spent their lives working collaboratively must be particularly sensitive to this issue and must not take for granted that "everyone understands what we meant." Ultimately, it is what is written in the proposal, not what we thought we agreed to, that will be remembered.

7. Helping define the mission or vision for the school and the SBM proposal.

Often we spend so much time teaching and administering schools that we rarely have the time to sit down as a school staff and community to discuss where we are, where we want to go, and what will be the important achievement objectives for students at our school. These issues form the basis for defining the mission of the school and comprise the second process in writing the SBM plan.

The school team, utilizing current research, provides the leadership necessary to bring together the different elements of the faculty, community, and administrators to identify the future directions of the school. This future direction or vision is then defined in terms of student achievement.

While we may believe that we all share common visions for our students and the school, in reality the faculties, teachers, parents, communities, and administrators may have very different—often contradictory—visions for the school. Bringing together such divergent points of view is a skill of successful administrators and teacher/parent leaders, and the result will be the sound foundation of the SBM program and subsequent achievement objectives for students.

8. Guiding the development of measurable objectives for the SBM proposal.

The goals of all SBM proposals must be measurable student achievement. One of the first problems is that educators are wary of setting measurable goals because they fear evaluation and failure.

All participants in the SBM program, however, must realize that only measurable objectives will validate the success or failure of SBM. Teachers and communities must internalize this issue and then strive to achieve what one hopes will be ambitious objectives for students.

Faculties and communities must understand that empowerment brings with it the responsibility for student achievement. The role of the principal and the entire school leadership team is to guide their school community in understanding the need for high, measurable student achievement objectives—objectives that will be internalized by the total school community and become part of an achievement-oriented school atmosphere.

Faculties, communities, and often administrators sometimes have difficulty making the transition to SBM when they understand that student achievement is their responsibility as a team. A central concept of SBM is that teachers must have the responsibility for professional decisions, and with that responsibility comes the accountability for the success or failure of those decisions.

9. Keeping SBM proposal writing positive.

As school teams write SBM proposals, they are often tempted to focus on negative responses to current education problems. Often the frustrations of teachers, administrators, and communities are translated into punitive, disciplinary measures as opposed to positive measures to improve student achievement.

Successful SBM programs address student achievement with positive proposals. It is the responsibility of the administrator and the local leadership team to guide SBM proposal-writing teams in this direction.

10. Ensuring the SBM writing team understands timelines and the workloads of co-administrators and principals.

As collaborative teams write an SBM program, teachers and parents need to understand the importance and significance of time and workloads of administrative staffs. Like textbooks and money, administrative time is a limited resource. Writing teams must be sensitive to this issue as they write proposals that affect school administrators. The same consideration also applies to the time and workload commitments of parents and teachers.

11. Combining timelines with objectives and proposals.

All SBM programs require a timeline that identifies the program for implementing the SBM plan. Principals must be careful to ensure that the timeline for SBM is realistic, within the possible workload for co-administrators, and coordinated with timelines for other elements of the school not affected by SBM.

One of the major adjustments administrators will have to make is related to time. The timeline is particularly important for administrators, because they become responsible for implementing many aspects of the SBM plan.

Principals must make critical decisions of implementing timelines that also meet the needs of the operation of the total school.

12. Understanding the variety of decision-making interests within any school and their role in SBM.

We often separate school communities into three decision-making elements: the faculty, community, and administrative staff. Principals and teacher/parent leaders, however, must remember that a variety of other entities affect the school and play a significant role in any decision-making process and that within each of these groups are many subgroups that will continue to play a role in the decision-making process.

For example, students in secondary schools play an important role in decision making. In addition, the roles of department chairpersons, auxiliary staff, faculty associations, and the teachers' union representatives must be identified. Also, each school is typically composed of a number of parent groups ranging from booster clubs and advisory councils to PTAs; the community consists of groups such as the chamber of commerce, local businesses, and alumni.

Principals and SBM writing teams must consider the role that will be played by each of these entities in the development of SBM plans, the vision of the school, and the decision-making process.

Summary

As school-based management programs continue to develop throughout the nation, teacher empowerment does not translate into a diminution of the authority of significance of school administrators as instructional leaders.

SBM, as a collaborative decision-making structure, has been utilized by school administrators, in one form or another, for decades with great success. But, for SBM to be successful, it will take the sensitivity and vision of each member of the school community brought together by effective administrators and teacher/parent leaders.

Finally, it is worth remembering that SBM is not an end in itself; it is not a panacea for the problems teachers and administrators face daily in American schools. SBM, we hope, will enhance greatly what does make a difference — excellent administrators and highly-skilled classroom teachers. For it is through them that a difference will be made for all our children.

The Power of School-Based Leadership

By M. Donald Thomas

School-based leadership establishes accountability for school results at their source: the school house. This accountability has driven school-based leadership to be established across the nation. School-based leadership:

- Has been legislated in Illinois to be implemented in every school in the Chicago Public School system
- Is being promoted by Casey Foundation grants in Warrentown, Mass.; Pittsburgh, Pa.; Savannah, Ga.; Dayton, Ohio; and Little Rock, Ark.
- Is being established in major school districts from Dade County, Fla., to Los Angeles, Calif.
- Has been incorporated in compacts between school districts and private sector agencies, e.g., Springfield, Mass.
- Is promoted by Chambers of Commerce throughout the nation
- Has spawned a large number of agencies that now train school personnel to implement school-based leadership.

School-based leadership is similar to decentralization efforts in the private sector. When corporations found themselves unable to compete overseas, they began to examine why the quality of American-made products was not comparable to foreign goods.

The work force, they found, did not feel "accountable" for the quality of the product. It was suggested that if employees had greater participation in decision making and in designing their

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work responsibilities, quality would improve. Thus began zero-defects programs and "crafted with pride" and quality-first systems. The movement soon influenced public education.

In the school setting, school-based leadership is built on the following principles:

1. All staff members have a thorough knowledge of the effective school literature and support research-based school practices
2. The principal employs a system of collaborative supervision to administer the school
3. Parents and community members are involved in school activities
4. The principal and teachers are evaluated on the basis of results achieved
5. All staff members possess the human skills to work together effectively
6. The school resources are concentrated on the instructional needs of the school
7. Accountability for achieving results is the basis for continued employment.

The individual school is the proper focus for accountability since the school is where one can establish whether all students are learning and whether educational services are being provided effectively. Districtwide information does not adequately reflect the quality of education being provided to individual students. Aggregated data usually mask the low educational performance of women, racial minorities, and/or low income students. It is at the school level that such problems, if they exist, should be corrected.

Support for School-Based Leadership

School-based leadership cannot be effectively established without support by the board of education and the superintendent of schools. In school districts where such support is firmly established, the system works well, e.g., Salt Lake City, Utah; Columbus, Ohio; Tulsa, Okla.; and Dade County, Fla. Support is evident in the following:

- A board of education policy
- A position statement by the superintendent
- A decentralization of the district budget
- A control office structure that supports school-level leadership
- Training in school-based leadership for the board, superintendent, and the central office staff.

Board support is the most difficult to obtain. Board members are sometimes uncomfortable not having responsibility for day-to-day decisions. Many do not appreciate the fact that under school-based leadership, teachers in many districts are permitted to make more decisions than they are.

Further, new superintendents tend to support the values and structures of their predecessors. Permanence can be established through board policy, central office structure, extensive principal training, and parental involvement in school councils.

If support is established at the district level, the system has a good chance of succeeding at the school level. It does, however, need support structures at the school level:

1. Training for parents, administrators, and teachers in understanding the school data base; utilizing human relations skills; accepting limits for decision making; establishing a research-based school improvement plan; measuring school results and school improvement; and appreciating budget practices, fiscal integrity, and inventory accountability
2. Guidelines for the operation of school councils and responsibilities of the various parties
3. Process for the adjudication of issues that cannot be resolved at the school level or by the school council
4. Clear enumeration of the limits of decision making that can occur at the school level.

School-based leadership is limited by law, budget, policy, and ethics. Local councils cannot violate state and federal law, rules, or regulations; spend more than what is provided in the budget; evade central board of education policies; or engage in unethical practices.

The principal is the key person in developing an understanding of the limits of the system. It is the principal who "protects" laws, budget, policy, and ethical practice. Within these limits councils are free to decide what schools should do and how best to do what needs to be done.

Councils should be particularly aggressive in taking responsibility for methodology, learning activities, sources of knowledge, and use of resources. Decisions in these areas are the heart and soul of teaching and learning. It is the stuff of which a profession is made.

Without the ability to make decisions in these areas, there is little to decide. Those who desire results at the school level cannot at the same time "tell" school-based personnel what and when and how to instruct. It is a contradiction to having accountability for results at any level.

Schools are the individual units of a school district that determine the level of success that district will attain. Decentralization in the education arena, much like business and political areas, often requires strong leadership—at both the district and school levels. Strong superintendents understand the need for strong principals; weak superintendents attempt to control principals. By

controlling principals, we weaken the entire system.

The nation's need for school accountability is well-served by school-based leadership. It provides results that support national goals and strengthens individual decision making. It also provides conditions for all students to learn well. Where it has been established, good things have happened:

- Pupil performance has improved
- Employee satisfaction has increased
- Community confidence in the schools has risen significantly
- Cooperation, trust, and respect for teachers and parents has been enhanced.

All educators should know the power of school-based leadership.

Implementing School-Based Management

By James E. Manning

The concept of school-based management varies from person to person and from school to school. Regardless of the ambiguity of the term, principals should not be apprehensive about school-based management because they have been using participatory and collaborative decision-making processes successfully for years.

Because of the ambiguity of the term, school-based management offers exciting possibilities for principals; however, a few common elements exist that principals can apply in their schools.

The first and foremost tenet principals should adhere to is that decision making, problem analysis, and problem solving should always involve those people directly affected by the final decision. If principals keep in mind that the concept of school-based management should be grounded in what is best for students and teachers, not who wields the most power for its own sake, we can utilize the concept effectively.

In the area of staff development, the necessary inservice needs of the teachers should be identified by the teachers themselves. The department chairs can establish a leadership council that brings the training needs of teachers to the conference table.

The principal, as the leader of the school, certainly has an obligation to contribute to any teacher training based on needs he or she has identified during clinical supervision, teacher evaluation, review of literature on staff development, and identification of students' and teachers' special needs.

Another critical area of a shared decision-making model is school climate. All stakeholders, teachers, support staff, parents, and students should be involved in planning to resolve problems in the learning climate of the school. My experience in trying to improve climate factors such as the cleanliness of the building and grounds, pride in school and community, school spirit, and the learning atmosphere in classrooms has reinforced the confidence I have in students.

Our school recently underwent a $6 million renovation and I was concerned about the attitude of students toward care of the building. I called my student leaders together and asked them to identify any problems. Then we brainstormed about possible solutions. I involved PTA leaders, teachers, and an assistant principal in the brainstorming sessions also.

We decided to hold a schoolwide assembly to promote school pride. The drama director volunteered to work with our student leaders on skits designed to convey key messages regarding school pride and cleanliness. Keeping instructional areas clear of students during lunch and taking care of our newly renovated building were two important concepts discussed.

The assembly was a huge success and the students did respond to the leadership of their peers. The entire process was a classic example of shared decision making resulting in the achievement of a schoolwide goal.

Some school systems are truly committed to school-based management. For example, the superintendent of Prince William County (Va.) Schools streamlined his school system, limiting direct-line authority to a small number of personnel and moving dollars to the building level where the principal and staff members make local decisions and expenditures.

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Xerox Corporation CEO David Kearns (1988) espouses this system in the following quote: "Make central office administration a service center. Go ahead and allocate funds, but the principal and staff will be responsible for spending them. Central administration should sell its services to the buildings—let teachers and principals decide (what services to buy). . . . That will streamline middle management . . . and it will put resources where they belong—in the school building."

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(See page 3 of this monograph.)

School-Based Management: A Checklist of Things To Consider

By Jerry J. Herman

Educators are often tempted to jump on the bandwagon of a "new" idea that appears to hold much promise. Our interest may arise from our readings, from attending a conference, from a neighboring district, or from community or board of education pressure. In addition, many of us are constantly looking for means of making our schools more effective and productive.

One of these very promising "new" ideas is that of school-based or site-based management. It is based on the premise that the quality of education will be focused at the school level, and that by empowering the stakeholders of the school to make important decisions related to the operation of their school, quality improvements will occur.

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I applaud those districts and schools that are experimenting with restructuring their operations by empowering the stakeholders through use of the *process* of school-based management.

If the decisionmakers in your school district are contemplating entering into the process of school-based management, it is crucial that all participants carefully reflect upon a wide variety of questions prior to jumping whole-heartedly into this "new" idea. Below is a series of questions that I suggest you consider before beginning the process of school-based management.

If you can, upon reflection and discussion, answer yes to all, or at least most, of these queries, you are ready to immediately start the process of school-based management. If you aren't sure about your answer to many of these questions, continue your reflective thinking and group discussions, and delay any attempt at initiating the school-based management process. If you answered no to many of the questions, don't start school-based management, because it will end in disaster.

School-Based Management Interrogatory Checklist

	Yes	No
1. Do you *really* believe in shared decision making?	_____	_____
2. Are you willing to take full responsibility (accountability) for your decisions?	_____	_____
3. Have you decided which stakeholders should be given the power to make final decisions?	_____	_____
4. Have you decided which stakeholders will be given an advisory role in the decision-making process?	_____	_____
5. Have the central decisionmakers reached agreement with the building decisionmakers on the policies, procedures, and methodologies to implement the *process* of school-based management?	_____	_____
6. Have the local decisionmakers been given maximum decision-making power and flexibility related to staffing and budget decisions?	_____	_____
7. Have you allowed sufficient time to reflect on all important decision areas *before* establishing a date for implementation?	_____	_____
8. Do you realize that this may cause an additional workload to be placed on the principal and the staff?	_____	_____
9. Have the local decisionmakers clearly defined, in operational terms, what they mean by school-based management?	_____	_____
10. Have you determined the outcome measures that will be assessed to decide whether or not your locally designed program of school-based management is working well, or whether or not it requires modification?	_____	_____
11. Are the roles of the central personnel and the building personnel clear in each area of decision making?	_____	_____
12. Is it clear, on the continuum of possible decision-making possibilities, which decisions are totally school-based, which are totally district-based, and which are shared?	_____	_____
13. Have you budgeted time and money to conduct training or staff development programs for those persons who are to become involved with school-based management for the first time?	_____	_____
14. Have you decided upon methods to perform formative and summative evaluations?	_____	_____
15. Will each school be able to develop its own school-based management procedures, or will there be a district structure applied to all schools within the district?	_____	_____
16. Do you have *realistic* expectations of what school-based management can do, and do you realize that it is not a "cure-all" for everything that is happening in the schools?	_____	_____
17. Do you realize that this is not a "quick fix," and that it will take considerable time and effort to implement and improve the process that you initially use?	_____	_____
18. Do you realize that in the long run, not only will the decision-making process change, but that there will be a dramatic change in the entire culture of the organization?	_____	_____
19. Are you prepared to collect "hard" and "soft" data to make a yearly report of the degree of success of the school-based management process in your school?	_____	_____
20. Do you believe that the process of school-based management will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of your school and your school district, or are you involved simply because it is the thing to do?	_____	_____

21. Do you believe that school-based management will improve communication, trust, and collaboration between the building and district levels? _____ _____
22. Do you believe that school-based management will create a greater feeling of ownership and greater support from the employees and the community at large? _____ _____
23. Do you honestly like and respect people, and are you willing to depend on them to help you make important decisions? _____ _____
24. Do your employee union leaders and your board of education members buy into school-based management? _____ _____
25. Do you believe that dispersed leadership is the best type of leadership, and do you believe that school-based management nurtures and stimulates new leadership at all levels of the organization? _____ _____
26. Do you realize that school buildings and school districts are open systems, and that school-based management is a *process* that improves the school's ability to become more open? _____ _____
27. Do you believe in "loosely coupled" organizations? _____ _____
28. Do you believe that school-based management can promote continuous school renewal? _____ _____
29. Do you believe in promoting entrepreneurial efforts? _____ _____

The Nuts and Bolts of School-Based Management

6. Site-Based Management: Creating a Vision and Mission Statement
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   By Jerry J. Herman
9. Site-Based Communications/Governance Committees
   By Jerry J. Herman

Site-Based Management: Creating a Vision and Mission Statement

By Jerry J. Herman

Principals and those they involve in decision making are best able to accomplish desired outcomes for their school through strategic planning—long-term planning to achieve a vision.

But before they can begin the operational planning that determines the routes to take (strategies) to arrive at the desired destination (outcomes), they should develop a vision of "what should be" at some point in the future. Then, once the vision is clear, they should write a mission statement. A mission statement is a brief—one page or less—narrative that defines the focus and purpose of the school.

Creating a Vision

The first step in developing a vision is deciding which stakeholders to involve in the visioning process. This group should continue to assist the principal until the mission statement is written. Stakeholders could include teachers, other administrators, parents, students, community representatives, school building booster representatives, parent-teacher organization representatives, central office representatives, school board member representatives, or representatives from any other group that is identified as an important stakeholder group.

Once the stakeholder planning group has been established, and the members are formally recognized and organized, an agenda of tasks should be outlined. Those tasks should include:

- Arriving at a statement of beliefs
- Conducting external scanning of important data from sources outside the school to determine trends during an extended time period
- Conducting internal scanning of important data within the school to determine trends during an extended time period
- Identifying the Critical Success Factors—those very few items that are absolutely crucial to developing and maintaining an excellent school.

Once these prerequisite tasks are completed, the stakeholders' committee can develop a vision of the preferred future for the school by studying the trends ("what is") and deciding upon those things they wish to continue and those they wish to change ("what should be"). Once the vision is agreed upon, the stakeholders can write a brief and clearly focused mission statement. This mission statement will allow the development of strategic goals and objectives, and action plans designed to meet those goals and objectives.

Now, let's turn to the prerequisite activities. The prerequisites are: creating a statement of beliefs, doing external scanning, conducting internal scanning, and identifying Critical Success Factors (CSFs).

Creating a Statement of Beliefs

If the stakeholder group is large, the statement of beliefs is probably best developed by breaking the group into subgroups of approximately six people each and instructing each group to brainstorm all the beliefs that they feel should be incorporated into a belief statement for the school.

Once the individual groups have listed their brainstormed beliefs, they should be asked to identify those 10 or so beliefs that they feel are of highest priority. Next, each group should present its list of beliefs to the total stakeholder group. The members of each group should provide the rationale for each of its selections and answer any questions from members of other groups.

If necessary, each group should select a spokesperson, and the spokespersons can continue a dialog until a final consensus is reached. Although there are many techniques to achieve consensus, it may be helpful to elaborate on one. Telstar is a technique whereby spokespersons for each group are seated in a circle, and seated in close proximity behind each spokesperson are the other members of her or his group. Although the open dialog is confined to the spokespersons, any member of any group may call for a caucus with her or his spokesperson by yelling "time out."

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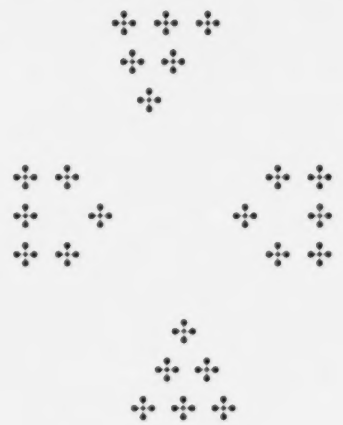
Once the caucus has been completed, the spokespersons' dialog format continues when the person who has called time out calls "time in." These caucuses may be used to give directions to the spokesperson, to provide the spokesperson with additional information, or for any purpose that will help the spokesperson represent the group's views as consensus is being reached. The diagram below displays the seating arrangement for a group of 24 participants.

Telstar Seating Arrangement



Using the above process and consensus building technique, a stakeholder committee will generally arrive at a list of beliefs that provide guidance for developing a vision and a mission statement. Some typical beliefs might be:

1. All students can learn.
2. A safe and healthy school environment is necessary.
3. The school's personnel should focus on school achievement, and student achievement should be closely monitored.
4. Teachers and administrators should be role models for students.
5. Parents and community members should support the school and should be involved in school planning activities.
6. Students should be cared for and highly valued, but expectations for them should be built into the school's culture.
7. Teachers should possess up-to-date knowledge of content and of instructional delivery methods, and the school district has an obligation to provide staff development opportunities to assist in training teachers.

After the beliefs have been agreed upon (or concurrently with the development of a statement of beliefs), scanning of external and internal variables can take place.

External Scanning

External scanning will identify trends among those variables that will definitely affect the current and future operation of the school. A few examples of external trend data that should be collected include legal mandates, demographic changes in the community, financial support, and community attitudes.

Internal Scanning

Internal scanning will identify trends among those variables that affect the current and future operations and strategies that the principal and other decisionmakers will use. A few examples of internal trend data include the monitoring and plotting of student achievement (which should be item analyzed and disaggregated by type of student for both norm-referenced and criterion-referenced tests), school climate survey data, and follow-up data of previous students.

Critical Success Factors

Concurrently with the development of a beliefs statement and the scanning activities, the stakeholders can arrive at consensus on those Critical Success Factors (CSFs) that are crucial to the development and maintenance of an excellent school.

CSFs are few in number and should be clearly identified, understood, and focused. A few examples of CSFs will clarify this concept:

1. All students are achieving at a level commensurate with their abilities. (Evaluated by monitoring student achievement data.)
2. The graduates of our high school do well in their advanced education efforts and in their employment situations. (Monitored by data from follow-up studies.)
3. The school climate is very positive. (Monitored by data from school climate surveys.)
4. Parents and community members are supportive of the school. (Monitored by determining the number of volunteers, by analyzing votes on tax issues, and by analyzing community attitudinal surveys.)
5. Teachers are up-to-date on the knowledge of their teaching area and on their knowledge of

instructional delivery techniques. (Determined by an analysis of attendance at conferences and inservice presentations and by direct observation.)

6. The building administrators believe in the mission and focus everyone's attention on student achievement. (Monitored by asking stakeholders if they understand the school's mission and by asking the administrators what procedures they use to monitor student learning and how this information is used for program planning.)

7. Sufficient resources—financial, temporal, and physical—are provided to allow the school to achieve excellence.

Once the scanning is completed, the beliefs statement agreed upon, and the Critical Success Factors identified, a vision statement can be developed.

Arriving at a Preferred Future Vision

In developing a future vision, the stakeholders can determine "what is" by reviewing the internal and external scanning data. The "what should be" can be arrived at by determining which of the scanning trends they wish to promote and which are not acceptable. Intervention strategies can then be developed to change the trend data in the future. In addition, the beliefs statement and the Critical Success Factors will help the stakeholders identity the vision for the school.

Although a vision document will usually be quite lengthy, a few example statements can demonstrate its essence:

EXCELLENT HIGH SCHOOL expects to develop happy, knowledgeable, and high achieving students during their years at Excellent High School and during the subsequent years of further education and on-the-job performance. This will be accomplished through teaching excellence that takes place within a caring, trusting, and high expectation environment that is centered around student achievement. In addition, Excellent High School will be provided with sufficient financial, human, temporal, and material resources to accomplish this vision. Also, Excellent High School will receive a high level of positive support from the community, the board of education, and the central administrative staff.

Assuming that a much more detailed vision is developed, the stakeholder's committee can turn to the development of a written mission statement.

Developing a Mission Statement

The mission statement is a simply worded, easily understood focus statement of no more than one page. Although writing a mission statement is often a time-consuming process due to the difficulties of arriving at the specific wording and of reaching consensus on the mission statement, it is a crucial step in the strategic planning process.

This statement is crucial because it serves as a guide for all that follows. In other words, all strategic goals, objectives, and action plans should support this mission, and they certainly cannot conflict with it in any way. A sample mission statement for Excellent High School will illustrate this point.

Mission of Excellent High School

At Excellent High School, our mission is to develop the intellectual, physical, and social capabilities of ALL our students, and this is to be accomplished within an educational environment that is healthy, safe, caring, trusting, and challenging. We have high achievement expectations for ALL students, and we hold ourselves accountable for delivering the knowledge and attitudes that are necessary to ensure high achievement levels.

To attain the above mission, we recognize that a high quality staff is necessary as we are committed to providing quality education, and we are, thus, obligated to providing opportunities for continuous development of our staff's professional skills.

We also recognize that the school belongs to our citizens, and we are dedicated to a strong program of two-way communications with our community's citizens. We are also dedicated to offering our citizens educational and social activities though our adult and community education programs and through our cooperation with other community organizations.

Summary and Conclusion

Principals who truly want to be leaders will involve stakeholders in a process that results in defining the school's destination. That is, the future vision of "What should be?" must be spelled out and agreed upon. A preferred vision can be clearly stipulated if the stakeholders perform four tasks:

1. Beliefs are enumerated and agreed upon

2. Critical Success Factors, those items that are absolutely necessary for the school to function

in an exemplary manner, are identified

3. Scans are made of external variables that affect the school's operations
4. Scans are made of internal variables that affect the school's operations.

Once these four tasks have been completed, a comprehensive vision statement can be developed. When the vision is completed, a short, focused mission statement can be written. This mission statement should clearly state the purpose of the school. In other words, it should state what the school is about—its reason for being.

With the vision and mission in place and accepted by all important stakeholder groups, the principal and those others he or she wishes to involve in the planning process can develop specific strategic goals and objectives that are in concert with the vision and mission. These goals and objectives then serve as the outcomes to be reached by action plans that are developed and put in place.

Principals must know where the school is going and how it will get there. Involving stakeholders in the process brings clarity, ownership, and support for the attempts to get there.

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Synergistic Curriculum Design: Its Time Has Come

By Raj K. Chopra

Today, in educational institutions—just as in corporations—decentralization, collaborative decision making and site-based management are the descriptors of change. Indeed, education is in the midst of a major redistribution of power. Top-down exercise of unlimited authority is being steadily replaced by grass-roots participation—a phenomenon that ironically promotes simultaneous feelings of individual empowerment and group interdependence. Best of all, this approach represents a giant step in achieving organizational goals while meeting the needs of both staff and students.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in the area of curriculum development and implementation. For too many years, principals have been little more than building managers. For too long, teachers have complained that they feel powerless outside their own classroom. In the Shawnee Mission (Kans.) Public Schools, we sought to change those things by insisting that principals become instructional leaders and that teachers (and patrons) become active participants in curriculum decision making.

This is not a decision that we undertook lightly. We formulated our plan after careful consideration of the pros and cons surrounding standardized instruction versus school-based curriculum.

In the case for school-based curriculum, some of those considerations were:

- Students learn in different ways and at different rates. Why not free the staff to tailor the curriculum/instruction to fit the student? Isn't this what cybernetics is all about?
- Students and their parents can obtain more substantive decisions relative to their concerns. Placement, retention, enrichment activities, and other issues can be worked out with the comfortable knowledge that these decisions reflect

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the realities of their particular school and are not simply made in blind compliance to "the rules" established by some great district power.

- Teachers have greater opportunity to function as professionals and the boundary line between "labor" and "management" recedes.

The case against includes considerations such as:

- Schools that are already weak will not become stronger.
- There may be a tendency to randomize the curriculum and instruction.
- There is greater probability that when the smoke clears there will be no quality control and no accountability.
- Certain teachers who are more aggressive may assume leadership roles detrimental to themselves and their colleagues.

After considering all the above, we took a synergistic approach to this challenge that offered so many risks—as well as opportunities—for educational effectiveness and renewal. Synergism is the interaction of various elements working together to achieve a total effect that is greater than the sum of the individual effects. With that goal in mind, we developed a plan that combined the most positive elements of a standardized curriculum with the most positive elements of a school-based curriculum. The result is a system that encourages principal autonomy, enhances staff morale, and, most important, better serves the student. At the heart of the plan were the Three Ps: planning, persistence, and performance.

Planning

In gearing curriculum content to meet student needs and the expectations of the local community the active participation of teachers and principals is not only desirable, it is necessary. A curriculum developed in a vacuum by central office personnel and dispersed to principals and teachers for implementation fails to elicit enthusiasm and has less chance of success. However, when teachers and principals participate in the initial planning and development process, they feel that sense of ownership which is so vital to success.

The process began in Shawnee Mission a few years ago when hundreds of individuals—both teachers and administrators—were asked to serve on task forces and work teams to develop a basic skills curriculum for reading/language arts and math. Eventually, teachers from all grade levels were involved, although our initial efforts centered on a K-6 curriculum.

Every one of the district's 1,600-plus teachers played a part in identifying the skills they felt were essential for each student to master at a given grade level. Team members then produced different instructional ideas and techniques to teach those skills. And finally, to ensure accountability, they developed tests for each skill.

Although this system—developed by the staff with the help of curriculum specialists—requires more paperwork on the teachers' part, teachers know they have a curriculum that will serve students well. They also know that while there are very specific expectations for skill mastery, they are free to use whatever methods work best for them in teaching those skills in the classroom. Likewise, central office administrators know that a quality curriculum—covering a designated body of knowledge—is in place for all the district's 30,000 students.

Each curricular program was pilot tested before being introduced districtwide. At present, efforts are underway to provide teachers with computer technology with which to manage the basic skills and curriculum and reduce their workload. Besides involvement in the development of the basic skill program, teachers and parents play an active role in textbook selection.

Another component of a synergistic curriculum is the role of the principal. We insist that they be instructional leaders in their buildings. After gearing curriculum to meet student needs, the active participation of teachers and principals in its implementation is essential. The principal shares his or her vision and helps define the soul of a school. When teachers and principals share the same vision, they generate a sense of commitment and make that vision a reality. The principal becomes the synthesizing force that brings together the energy and expertise of the staff, and by doing so, creates that extra dimension of power and responsibility for effective action.

To help principals fulfill the expectation that they become instructional leaders in their buildings, intensive and ongoing training is provided in effective instruction, leadership, and management. Likewise, teachers receive ongoing inservice in effective instructional techniques.

Persistence

Change does not come easily. Any time a new system is put into place, there are inevitable glitches. There may also be resentment from those who preferred doing things "the old way." There may be resistance. It is necessary to maintain an open mind and a willingness to modify the plan—keeping what works, tossing what doesn't. It is also necessary to continue to reiterate to staff members the benefits to students and to continue to provide the staff with whatever training may be necessary to help them effectively implement the new curriculum. However, if staff members have a sense of ownership through active partici-

pation in the earlier stages, they tend to be more positive and persistent in their implementation efforts.

Performance

It cannot be overemphasized that site-based management of any kind is ultimately only as effective as the positive impact it has on student learning. In Shawnee Mission, the Research and Development Department continuously monitors the level of student achievement. Should indicators show decline, plans of action are immediately developed to remedy the situation.

Such was the case when student scores declined on both nationally standardized tests and the Kansas State Minimum Competency Test. To reverse this trend, 1988 was declared by the Board of Education as a "Year of Mathematics." Their declaration was accompanied by an allocation of additional financial resources and provisions for curriculum review. Planning was initiated with principals, teachers, and instructional department personnel. Objectives designed to highlight the designated year of mathematics included items such as:

- Increased student access to mathematics activities in class and out
- Staff development in the application of math in every subject area
- Utilization of computers in math instruction
- A comparative study of Shawnee Mission's K-12 math program with other districts
- An updating of math textbooks
- The publication of a parent newsletter on "mathematics and the future"
- The piloting of a system for principals to use in evaluating math instruction.

But declining test scores are not the only impetus for improvement. Consistent with a school-based curriculum approach is the opportunity for teachers or principals to initiate a curriculum review. In Shawnee Mission, curriculum review committees are always made up of teachers and principals, and very often, members of the community.

An example of that effort is the social studies curriculum review currently in progress in this district. The initiative for this review came from principals and teachers who felt the need for re-evaluation in light of demographic changes in our student population and rising expectations among the community. Approximately 60 teachers and principals are actively involved in this major project, which will revamp the K-12 social studies curriculum. Their efforts are concentrating on research in the social studies field; knowledge and skills to be taught at a particular grade level; national and local expectations of social studies content; and classroom teacher expertise and experience.

The committee is continually seeking and receiving ideas for curriculum improvement from other teachers throughout the district. At each phase of development, from the gathering of data to implementation of the revised K-12 curriculum, principals and teachers work together in grade-level groups, and decisions are routinely made by consensus, after extensive brainstorming.

A similar review has been conducted for our physical education curriculum.

Regardless of what curricular area is being addressed, there is valuable, beneficial fallout:

- Increased ability of participants to build consensus
- Development of a sense of ownership among those who will teach the curriculum
- Selling of curriculum content by teachers to teachers
- Enhancement of collegiality, breaking down of psychological barriers between elementary and secondary principals and teachers, thus enhancing teamwork.

These kinds of decentralization efforts encourage principals and teachers to perceive central office curriculum personnel as helpers rather than dictators, and their experience and knowledge are actively sought. This approach also underscores the need and desire for principals to be instructional leaders. When teachers perceive that principals are interested in the instructional process, they are motivated to increase the effectiveness of their teaching strategies. Recognition of the interdependence among teachers and principals at the site level and of curriculum specialists at the central office level promotes harmony and further cements a shared vision and, consequently, improved performance.

Budget Control

Another significant step in the decentralization process is to give more authority and responsibility to the individual schools for budget control. In Shawnee Mission, we have decentralized our budgeting process by putting budgeting in the hands of principals and, through them, the hands of the teachers.

The result has been the allocation of resources on the basis of needs identified at the building level. Prior to this decentralized approach, the budgeting process resided primarily with the central office curriculum directors.

The curriculum directors initially resisted this change because they believed they had lost control of financial resources (and, consequently, their influence over some teachers and principals in program activities). However, as time passed, the

principals' requests for the "expert power" of curriculum specialists increased—as they relied on them less for budgetary considerations and more for instructional assistance. This developing dependence on central office curriculum specialists for their expertise has had a positive impact on the curriculum specialists. They discovered anew that they were needed and valued as educators.

A success-oriented curriculum comes from the active participation of principals and teachers who ultimately teach the contents.

As a child growing up in India, I witnessed workers on a construction site, forming a long line with each person standing several feet apart. They tossed bricks from one person to the next with great precision, rhythm, and coordination. It was a flawless, automatic operation. Each brick, after a long, perfectly timed journey down the line, finally reached the hands of a mason. I was always amazed at the accuracy and synchronization of the teamwork that produced such unerring results.

It was only years later that I realized the secret of their success. These workers, though few in number, viewed their function—the passing of the bricks—as their contribution to the total purpose: the construction of a beautiful building. By being active partners with a vested interest in the project, their hearts, hands, and minds worked in perfect harmony; each worker received the brick with care and passed it on with equal care to ensure the success of the next catcher. They had vested themselves in each other's success.

It is the same with all of us when we develop curriculum. Each concept is like laying a brick, one over the other. A success-oriented curriculum comes from the active participation of principals and teachers who ultimately teach the contents. The joy of these "builders" all comes from the same source: a personal pride in creating something of beauty and value. For brick tossers that may be an architectural achievement. For educators, it is seeing the result of their efforts in a happy, competent, skilled, and knowledgeable young person.

Great hope is being placed on the application of site-based management to education. While its success in business and industry has been well documented, the degree of its success in education will be, in large part, determined by a school district's ability to accomplish it. Here are a few suggestions to help build a healthy climate that will facilitate the development of staff commitment—the ultimate essential in advancing decentralization.

- *Mutuality of Expectations*

When teachers and principals have a clear understanding of expectations, a common belief emerges—that teaching content effectively will increase student learning across the board. Believing in the product (curriculum) renews commitment and sets the principle of positive expectations in motion. A shared sense of ownership results in shared leadership to create success for students.

- *Mutuality of Dependence*

Henry Ford once said, "Coming together is a beginning and working together is progress." The accelerating pace of complex change makes the development of the spirit of togetherness an imperative if the force of change is to be transformed into positive progress for staff and students. Curriculum development efforts thus can become important vehicles for bringing teachers, principals, and central office curriculum specialists together.

An environment that recognizes the value of each individual's unique perspective, background and experience, and, therefore, their capacity to make a special contribution, increases his or her own confidence and self-esteem. This appreciation of each other, and the resultant teaming of talent, leads to a shared winning attitude rather than an individual winning attitude. Together, staff members begin to accentuate the positive in the newly developed curriculum and its effective delivery to students. The focus now shifts to the recognition of the value of interdependence and acknowledgment of the results of effective teamwork. Ultimately, and most important, it's the students who gain from this cooperative and positive attitude.

- *Mutuality of Trust and Respect*

Cooperation is the catalyst in the development of trust and respect. Teachers begin to have a sense of responsibility for teaching content that they help develop. Testing student performance does not become an end, but a means to diagnose needed changes in teaching strategies and/or needed reinforcement of successful concept development. This gives testing a nonthreatening nature by focusing more on effective teaching and student growth than on reporting test results for media and press purposes, even though this cannot be completely avoided. When teachers believe in the curriculum and teach with conviction, students will respond in kind.

- *Mutuality of Communication*

Opportunities for teachers and principals to share their ideas, listen to each other, and exchange their thoughts freely and openly, build a quality support system. Such communication leads to mutuality of understanding and sensitivity to the

thoughts and concerns of others. It has been stated that for good health, a person needs a good psyche, a good lifestyle, and a social support system. A school district or an individual school building, likewise, needs good feelings among the staff, loyalty to the controlling mission of the organization, underpinned with a solid support system.

- *Mutuality of Vision*

When people have opportunities to participate in decision making, they recognize the importance of the contribution of each individual to the achievement of their collective success. As a consequence, each person attempts to develop competence in order to have a positive impact on the organization. Mutuality in acceptance of the direction the district should take is in the best interests of their students' future. The presence of trust creates a climate in which people commit themselves to the organizational mission; and they envision both together and independently, what can be.

Site-based management is clearly the wave of the future in our profession. It is a slowly developing, greatly needed trend in educational enterprise today. In reality, it is not as alien a concept as some might initially think. In fact, it is a great opportunity to combine the best of both worlds—standardized goals (established through broad-based consensus) with site-based implementation (by teachers and administrators whose skills have been upgraded through inservice training).

This approach to curriculum is particularly significant because it represents a paradigm shift—from how the learner responds to the "system" to how the system responds to the learner. The closer the decision-making power is to that learner, the more the system can be "fine tuned." Remember, however, that we are talking about tuning the means, not the end.

Apart from the insistence on standard ends, I see little intrinsic advantage to traditional standardized instruction. Let's let the resources flow to the learner. Let's let the people who deliver those resources have a significant say in how it is done. If an idea is educationally sound, then let us seek to make it administratively feasible. Yes, there must be trust.

Yes, there must be dialog. Yes, there must be commitment and cooperation. A synergetic approach to curriculum in Shawnee Mission continues to energize the district for high student achievement. I believe that with careful thought and consideration, it can do the same for your district.

Vision for the Future: Site-Based Strategic Planning

By Jerry J. Herman

Strategic planning is the vehicle that will help administrators enhance the journey into the future, for strategic planning is a long-term process that includes a vision of what should be. Without a vision of the future, principals, teachers, students, and parents will probably take many unnecessary detours or arrive at the wrong destination.

The principal can only lead if there are followers who buy into a vision and accompanying goals. A true leader has an identified destination. Enter strategic planning—the principal's guide to site-based planning leadership.

The Figure presents a model to assist the principal in the strategic planning effort. The keys to successful strategic planning include:

- Involving stakeholders
- Scanning for relevant data
- Identifying critical success factors
- Developing vision and mission statements
- Doing an analysis of the site manager's supports and constraints
- Arriving at strategic goals and objectives
- Developing action plans and allocating resources
- Arriving at monitoring structures.

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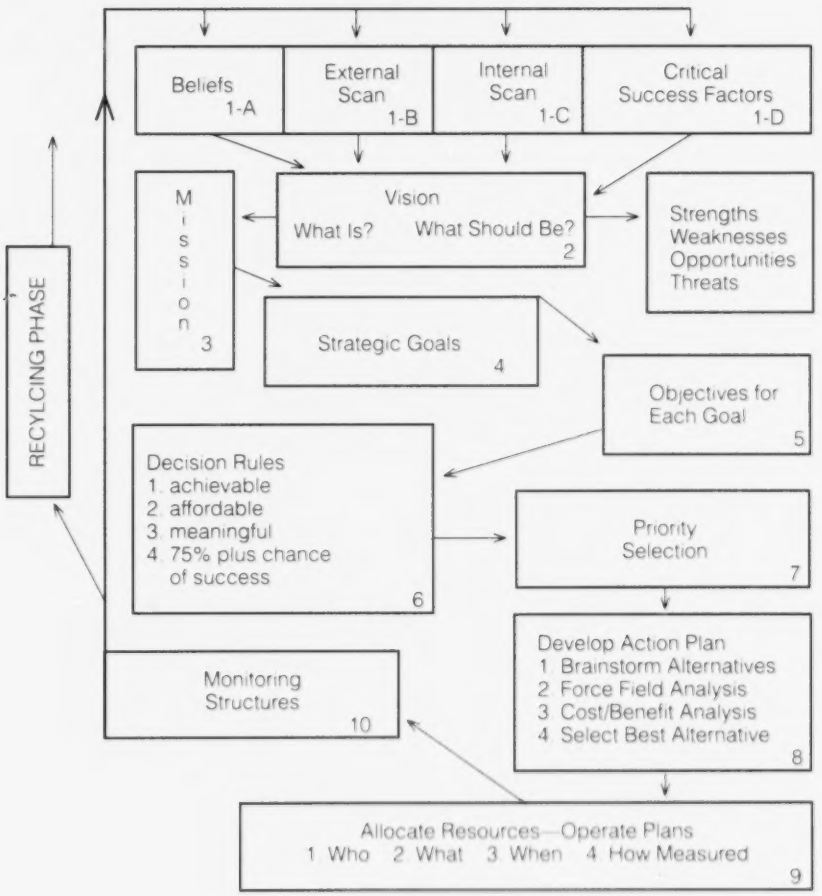
Herman's Strategic Planning Model



Involving Stakeholders in the Process

Although principals can create a personal view of what should be at some future point (visioning), they must have a buy-in by others to develop plans to achieve that desired state. Getting others to buy in requires involving stakeholders in the visioning and mission development stages of strategic planning.

If a vision is the spelling out of the desired future state, then a mission is an overview statement of desired outcomes. This mission guides all planning activities for the school. To involve stakeholders in the visioning and mission development activities, consider:

- Identifying key communicators and leaders from such stakeholder groups as parents, staff members, community, and students
- Deriving consensus techniques that will cause agreement related to a school's vision and mission
- Initiating a communications structure that fosters clear communications and consensus agreement to the total school building's stakeholders.

If stakeholders can't believe in the vision and mission, any resulting planning efforts will not be focused. Ultimately, the desired outcomes will not be achieved because there is no agreement on what end results are to be achieved.

Scanning Data

Another crucial key to strategic planning success is the ability to identify, scan, and project from important data. Scanning probably will take place during the development of a vision and mission statement, but it is a continuous process.

The external data a principal should scan include demographic, political, financial, and attitudinal data. For example, it is important to determine if there are economic, educational, or cultural changes taking place in the community the school serves. Sources of external scanning data are the

media, the school district central offices, realtors, charity services, local government, census organizations, and numerous other institutions. External data should also assess parent and community resident attitudes toward the instructional program and toward students and employees.

Internal data may include a disaggregated analysis of student achievement scores by such variables as sex, socioeconomic status, cultural background, and other significant inputs. It may also include school climate surveys or employee attitude surveys.

Any significant data that may affect the school's operation should be systematically collected and analyzed for trends. These trends should be utilized when developing strategic action plans or when planning strategies to achieve the outcomes desired in the vision and spelled out in the school's mission statement.

Critical Success Factors

Not everything that takes place in a school is "critical" to the successful operation of that school. The principal (and perhaps the stakeholders' committee) should identify those very few factors that are critical to the school's success. Once they are identified, they should be the focus of the established strategic goals. They should also narrow the information collected and the resource allocation focus to maximize those few factors identified as critical. Two examples of CSFs (Critical Success Factors) for a school might very well be student achievement and community support. Of course, individual schools could well possess CSFs that are different from one another, as well as common CSFs.

Supports and Constraints

Once the principal has a vision, develops a mission statement, completes external and internal scanning, and identifies the CSFs for her or his building, it is wise to identify the supporting factors and constraining factors that will influence the ability to achieve the vision.

Some supporting factors might be: parental and staff support, district level commitment to the school's vision, and assistance from a business partner that has adopted the school. On the other hand, constraining sources could include: taxpayer resistance, negative state mandates, and resistance by union leaders.

Once the supports and constraints are identified, the principal must work with others to develop strategies to maximize the supporting factors and to minimize the effects of the constraining factors. Carefully attending to the factors may well spell out the difference between success and failure.

Strategic Goals and Objectives

Strategic goals are those broad outcome statements that allow the development of plans. For example, a lower dropout rate, increased student achievement scores, and more positive school climate are candidates for goals. Under each goal one or more specific objectives might be listed. Examples could include: "By *(date)* we will have improved the dropout rate by _____ %"; or "By *(date)* an employee attitude survey will be administered and the results will display that _____ % of the employees feel that the school is an excellent place to work."

Action Plans and Resources

Once the goals and objectives are clarified, fit within the mission, and assist in achieving the vision, action plans must be developed. The format for action planning includes:

- What are we trying to accomplish?
- Who is to do it?
- How is it to be done?
- How will we know if it has been accomplished?
- When will it be measured?
- What resources are required to carry out the plan?

Goals and objectives are great, but they are futile statements if an action plan is not put into place. The degree of success of the action plan can only be measured by determining up front the specific measures that will be used to determine whether or not the goals and objectives have been achieved satisfactorily.

Monitoring Structures

The final step in the strategic planning process is to monitor the achievement level of the goals and objectives that have been established. Also, it is crucial to continue scanning the external and internal factors that may signify an adjustment to the overall strategic plan is required.

Finally, the monitoring process should assess alignment of all matters with the mission statement and with the vision for the school. Without arriving at comprehensive monitoring structures, the principal and the stakeholders will not be able to determine progress or realize if an objective, goal, or vision has been achieved.

The Principal Is the Key

To do the job well, a principal should have a vision and develop long-term strategic plans to

achieve this vision. A strategic plan will allow the principal to fulfill her or his leadership function as master planner, if that leader will:

- Involve stakeholders in the planning effort
- Develop and reach consensus on a future vision
- Arrive at a guiding mission statement
- Identify those factors that are critical to success
- Scan important external and internal information and use this to identify trends
- Analyze those factors that constrain or support your efforts
- Develop strategic goals and objectives
- Arrive at and implement action plans
- Allocate resources to implement the action plans
- Develop monitoring structures to assess goals, objectives, mission, and vision.

Change is continuous. One can either be a victim of change or take charge and plan the directions of change. A leader takes charge. A leader-principal must be a strategic planner to lead in today's complex and dynamic school environment.

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Site-Based Communications/ Governance Committees

By Jerry J. Herman

Two of the most popular current themes in local school district management writings and discussions are "empowerment" and "site-based management."

Empowerment is praised because it allows employees, parents, and other stakeholders to be involved in decision making, to gain a degree of ownership in the decisions and in the institution's vision, mission, and programs.

Site-based management is touted as the most effective means of school improvement. With regard to the school district level, it is believed that the most effective decision making takes place at the service's level of delivery—the school building.

If they buy into the concepts of empowerment and site-based management, the building administrators' methods of operation are greatly modified.

In the area of strategic planning—long-term planning to achieve a vision—the stakeholders are involved in arriving at consensus beliefs, developing a vision, creating a mission statement, conducting internal and external data scans, and identifying those few factors that are critical to the success of the school's operation.

In the area of operational planning, the stakeholders are involved in the development of yearly action plans, which are designed to arrive at the desired outcomes stated in the mission and vision statements.

The action plans detail who is responsible, what is to be accomplished, when it is to be accomplished, what resources are necessary to accomplish the desired output or outcome, how it is to be accomplished, and how to measure whether or not the desired output or outcome was accomplished.

When developing a model to create an environment for empowerment and site-based planning and management at the school level, one must address several questions.

1. Why develop a communications/governance structure that empowers stakeholders at the school-building level?

Before principals decide to create a communications/governance structure that empowers stakeholders, they must determine if the district's superintendent of schools and the board of education will allow such a structure to be developed.

If the answer from the superintendent and the board of education is a resounding "yes," then principals must think through the reasons they need or want such a structure. What purpose will be served by involving stakeholders in planning and decision making at the building level? Once the principal and whomever else is involved decide on the purpose, that statement should be written and given to all stakeholders. A statement of purpose might read as follows:

Excellent High School's Communications/ Governance Committees are designed to allow a broader base of discussion and information sharing among parents, administrators, community members, students, and employees in the strategic (long-term with a vision) decision making and operational (short-term action planning) decision making that takes place at the building level. It is expected that this broader-based dialog will permit and encourage the various human elements of our school's educational community to work more cooperatively and positively together, with the end result being improved quality and quantity of instructional programs being experienced by the students of Excellent High School.

Once the purpose has been decided upon, it is important that principals and those whom they have involved in the initial planning, conduct a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis of the school.

The basic questions to be answered by this analysis are: What are the advantages and disadvantages of creating this empowerment structure? What can assist or constrain the building-level decision making and planning activities if such an empowerment structure is implemented?

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2. What are the potential advantages and disadvantages of creating this empowerment structure?

Although a variety of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (i.e., advantages and disadvantages) will be identified and analyzed at the school level, only a few examples will be listed to provide a feel for this planning activity, which should precede the actual implementation of a communication/governance empowerment structure.

Potential strengths might include:

- Many parents and community members have expressed an interest in becoming more involved with the school
- Teachers have been heavily involved in planning the curriculum and monitoring student achievement and would easily and willingly accept an important role in broader-based planning and decision making
- Students have not been involved in the past, and many could play a role in planning for a more positive school climate and an enhanced instructional delivery system
- Classified employees have much to offer in the planning of better support systems
- Community businesses and industries are anxious to enter into partnerships with schools.

Potential weaknesses might include:

- A reluctance on the part of some administrators and teachers to allow others, especially students and parents, to have a role in planning and decision making related to areas that have traditionally been considered their private authority areas
- Unions may object to the involvement of others
- Stakeholders do not have the training necessary to conduct planning and decision-making activities in a broad-based collaborative manner
- Some important power groups or powerful decisionmakers in the community may prefer to influence the school's operation by hidden agendas and by behind-the-scenes activities
- Many individuals will not be willing to devote the time that will be required to produce high-quality and comprehensive plans.

Once the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats have been identified and analyzed, the principal and the others involved in the initial design phase should anticipate the questions that might be asked and should provide answers to those questions so stakeholders will be knowledgeable and comfortable when they are asked to serve on the communications/governance committees.

3. What questions must be addressed?

- How will the communications/governance model tie into budget development?
- Will both ad hoc (temporary) and permanent communications/governance committees be utilized?
- Will ad hoc committees be given a specific charge and a specific date of termination?
- How will the members of these communications/governance committees be chosen?
- Can the building-level committees present their recommendations to the board of education and the superintendent as well as to the principal?
- How will overlap and conflict between and among these committees and parent-teacher organizations, booster groups, and other existing support groups be avoided?
- When and how is this communications/governance empowerment model to be implemented?
- What means of communications among and between these committees will be used?
- What are the specific duties and responsibilities or charges of the building-level communications/governance committees?
- Are there other detailed questions besides those addressed above that must be decided before this structure is implemented?

Once the purpose had been decided upon, the potential strengths and weaknesses have been identified and analyzed, and a comprehensive listing of specific questions addressed, the principal can design the appropriate format.

4. What format is the best?

A structure similar to the one discussed below should be established prior to involving stakeholders in the communications/governance structure at the building level.

At Excellent High School, the communications/governance structure that empowers our stakeholders is one of a tri-level approach that includes: permanent stakeholder communicational governance committees, ad hoc committees that may be appointed to deal with a specific plan, topic, or problem area and will operate for a finite and specified time period, and permanent buildingwide support groups. A little amplification of each of these groups will clarify their charges:

Permanent buildingwide support groups are groups that operate under formal by-laws. Examples of this type of group are parent-teacher

organizations, band boosters, sports boosters, and academic boosters.

Ad hoc building-level groups are groups created periodically to accomplish a highly specific purpose over a specified time. At the end of the specified time, the group will make recommendations to the principal. If the work is not completed during the specified time, the life of the ad hoc committee can be extended for an additional specified time.

Once the recommendations are made, the group is disbanded and the principal acts on the recommendations and notifies the committee and all others affected by the decision.

Permanent building-level communications/governance committees are composed of representatives from each stakeholder group, and the committees operate under a specific list of duties and responsibilities that are written and widely distributed.

This committee structure is the key to innovative empowerment at the school level, and an outline of a potential structure and listing of duties and responsibilities will be helpful at this point.

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5. What are the structure, duties, and responsibilities of building-level communications/governance committees?

- The principal shall serve as liaison to her or his building-level communications/governance committee. It shall be the principal's responsibility to call the initial yearly meeting of the group and to arrange for a meeting place, typed minutes, and other items that from time to time may be needed by the community. She or he also organizes the initial committee selection and appointment process.
- The committee shall be composed of 10 citizens selected at random from the list of citizens who have volunteered to serve, one representative from each building support group already in existence; two students from each grade level; two representatives from each classified unionized or non-unionized group (custodians, food service workers, aides, etc.); 10 teachers selected by the teaching staff or by the teacher's union, if one exists; and up to five additional members appointed by the principal if she or he feels that the representatives previously selected do not represent all important stakeholder groups.
- The committee members shall elect a chairperson from sources other than administration.
- The committee members shall meet at least once a month during the school year.
- The committee members shall be free to discuss and make recommendations related to all needs of the building's programs and all means of improving the educational climate for students and employees. The committee shall make recommendations to these ends.
- Committee recommendations shall be written. If the recommendations have budget implications, they should be received by the principal prior to December 1 of the year preceding the budget being planned.
- At least once yearly, the committee shall submit a comprehensive report to the principal, and the report shall be forwarded to the superintendent of schools and to the board of education. If requested, the committee members will make themselves available for an oral presentation before the board of education and the superintendent of schools.
- Each June, the committee shall present a written evaluation of the committee's activities, an evaluation of the communications/governance committee structure, and any recommendations the committee wishes to make regarding the structure or the activities of the committee for the succeeding school year.

Once all the details have been addressed, the committee has been made operational, and activities have taken place during the school year, it is crucial to evaluate the success of the committee and its activities. Only through such evaluation exercises will the committee strengthen itself and become an ever-increasing positive support and empowerment structure.

6. How will the degree of success of the empowerment structure be measured?

Although numerous criteria could be used to measure the success of the communications/governance empowerment structures, the most important ones will include the following:

- Have the activities and recommendations of the communications/governance groups been accepted and have they had a positive impact on the school building's programs and students?
- Do the various representative stakeholder groups express positive feelings toward the communications/governance structure and do they feel that they have been empowered?
- Do the members of the various groups want the structure to continue and do they volunteer to continue their membership?
- Are strategic goals and objectives identified and are action plans developed to achieve these consensus goals and objectives? In other words, is there a collective vision and mission, and have activities been focused and designed to achieve the collective vision and mission?

A Final Comment

Principals who firmly believe that site-based management is the way to improvement and who firmly believe that they can best improve the programs and opportunities for students by empowering stakeholder groups, should develop their building-level communications/governance structures to the fullest potential. What little principals may give up of their positional power has the potential of reaping a harvest of goodwill, understanding, and support for all the activities and plans that will make their school excellent.

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Theory Into Practice

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School-Based Management: Action Plans To Make Your Vision a Reality

By Jerry J. Herman

As a principal, you have taken the leadership necessary to develop a strategic plan (a long-term plan to achieve a "what-should-be" vision) for your school. You have done this by involving representatives of all stakeholders' groups in the following activities:

- Reaching consensus on the beliefs that provide the underpinnings for the culture of the school
- Collecting important internal scanning data such as student disaggregated test scores and school climate measures
- Collecting important external scanning data such as those related to demographic, political, economic, and attitudinal data
- Identifying those few CSFs (Critical Success Factors) that are absolutely necessary to achieve a productive and caring school.

The beliefs, scanning data, and identified CSFs provide an assessment of "what is." This "what is," then, can be compared to "what should be" at some point in the future. This "what should be" determination becomes the vision for the future. This vision, along with a mission statement (a short statement of the basic purpose of the school), will guide the principal and those others that the principal wishes to involve in further planning efforts to take a few additional steps.

The principal and her or his planners will then:

1. Analyze the strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) both within the school and outside the school. This SWOT analysis will identify the supportive factors and the constraining factors that will be taken into account when devising plans to achieve the vision of "what should be."
2. Establish strategic goals (outcomes) to be achieved at that point in the future at which the vision is to be in place.
3. Establish specific objectives that detail the exact outputs to be achieved by identified target dates. Each strategic goal may well have numerous objectives tied to it. An example of a strategic goal and a few objectives tied to it will help clarify these two steps.

An Example of a Strategic Goal and Related Objectives:

A strategic goal of Excellent Elementary School is to improve the school climate. In order to accomplish this goal, eight specific objectives are identified. Three of these objectives are:

Objective #1: By October 1, 1990, baseline data will be collected by administering and analyzing a school climate survey instrument.

Objective #2: By June 30, 1991, action programs will be devised to improve climate measures in areas identified as needing improvement.

Objective #3: By June 30,1995, a minimum of 98 percent of the students and employees will indicate improvement in the climate factors that were previously identified as needing improvement.

Once the strategic goals and objectives have been determined, the principal is responsible for devising action programs that will cause those strategic goals and objectives to be reached. Obviously, if all the strategic goals are reached at that point in the future designated by the strategic plan, the school's vision has been achieved. It is crucial that well-designed action plans are activated, for only through this delivery structure will the school's vision be reached.

The effective and efficient principal will involve others in developing action plans that identify the detailed tasks to be accomplished, the time by which they are to be accomplished, how the accomplishment is to be measured, the resources necessary to accomplish the objective, and who is responsible for achieving each of the tasks listed in the action plan. The simplest way to develop the action plan is to follow this sequence of steps:

Step #1: Identify all tasks that must be accomplished without regard to the order in which they are to be completed. It will greatly retard progress if the time sequence is of concern during Step #1.

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Action Plan

Task	Chronological Order	Who	When	Resources
Conduct needs assessment	1	Asst. principal	1/1/90	Instrument, 5 hrs. $100
Identify clients	3	Principal	3/1/90	2 hrs.
Analyze needs assessment	2	Staff committee	2/1/90	40 hrs. released time, $580
Identify specific programs for 10 years	4	Staff committee	4/1/90	200 hrs. after school, $1,200
Develop budget estimates for all programs	6	Principal	6/1/90	30 hrs.
Identify presenters	5	Staff committee, principal	5/1/90	45 hrs. after school
Etc.	28	Whomever	2/15/90	?
Etc.	11	Whomever	4/21/90	?

Step #2: Place a sequential number beside each task that has been identified.

Step #3: Identify the person or persons who are responsible for completing each task.

Step #4: Identify the resources necessary to accomplish the objective.

Step #5: State the measurement that will be used to determine whether or not the objective has been achieved. This assumes that it will be achieved within the time limit and within the resources allocated to the action plan.

An example from Heavenly Middle School will clarify this process. This example assumes principal leadership and the involvement of significant stakeholders in developing and carrying out the action plan.

A Sample Action Plan for Heavenly Middle School:

Strategic Goal: To improve the skills of the teaching staff. Objective #1: By June 1, 1990, to develop a comprehensive staff development program, which is to be implemented over the next 10 years.

The action plan displayed for this goal only presents the June 1,1990, segment. In reality, action plans would be laid out for each staff development program over the 10-year period, and quality assurance measures would be devised for each of the staff development programs.

A Final Caution

A principal can involve stakeholders in strategic planning (long-term planning to achieve the vision of "what should be" for the school) by:

- Developing a consensus statement of beliefs
- Conducting an internal information scan
- Carrying out an external scan
- Identifying CSFs (Critical Success Factors)
- Arriving at a vision of "what should be" by analyzing the gaps (needs) between "what is" and "what should be"
- Writing a concise mission statement
- Conducting a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis of the internal and external factors in the environment
- Agreeing on strategic goals to be accomplished.
- Developing specific objectives for each strategic goal.

Having done all the above, nothing significant and purposeful will take place unless detailed action plans are developed for each objective. Each action plan should identify:

- The specific tasks to be accomplished
- The chronological order in which each task is to be accomplished

- The person or persons responsible for accomplishing each task
- The resources required to accomplish each task
- The measurement to be used in determining whether or not the objective has been achieved at the qualitative level desired, within the resources allocated, and within the time limit targeted.

The principal holds ultimate responsibility for the success or failure of the strategic plan for her or his building. Only through detailed and comprehensive high quality action plans being accomplished can the vision of "what should be" be reached. The joy of reaching the vision can be shared by all, but it is the principal who is the leader and the person ultimately responsible.

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Instructional Leadership Teams in Secondary Schools: Developing a Framework

By Philip Hallinger

Because principals were once teachers themselves, it is often assumed that they have the tools to provide instructional leadership. Unfortunately, preparation as a teacher does not ensure that a principal is capable of helping teachers improve classroom instruction or of coordinating curriculum. In secondary schools, this is compounded by the fact that the principal typically supervises a large number of teachers with a wide variety of subject matter specializations.

It is particularly difficult for secondary school principals to schedule the uninterrupted blocks of time necessary for coordinating curriculum, observing lessons, and meeting with teachers. Thus, secondary school principals are forced to delegate much of their instructional leadership functions.

The complex organizational structure of secondary schools places additional constraints on the principal. Because the secondary school principal must delegate many leadership functions, there is less direct contact with teachers, students, and parents. The less frequent interaction reduces the principal's opportunities to personally communicate key values and makes it more difficult for a single leader to shape, communicate, and reinforce a vision of what the school can become.

Consequently, few secondary school principals find themselves in a school setting that provides the necessary resource support for them to be instructional leaders. If this is the case, how can the secondary school principal exercise strong instructional leadership?

Delegation a Key

The work of Little and Bird (1984, 1985) supports the notion that secondary school principals exercise instructional leadership by delegating responsibilities and working closely with teams of administrators, supervisors, and teachers. For example, Hord, Hall, and Stiegelbauer (1983) found that successful implementation of innovations in high schools is best accomplished by principals who work closely with a "consigliere"—a staff member who handles many of the formal and informal routine tasks necessary for project implementation.

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In support of these findings, discussion of school reform has focused attention on the benefits of teacher involvement in instructional decisions both at the classroom and school levels (Carnegie Forum, 1986; Hallinger and Richardson, in press). This is particularly relevant at the secondary level where the organization's size and complexity distance the principal from intimate knowledge of specific instructional issues and subject matter.

Thus, a case can be made for decentralizing instructional leadership in secondary schools. The implication is that principals can exercise strong instructional leadership by systematically utilizing administrators and teachers to assist in coordinating and monitoring curriculum and instruction. Of course, this is not really new information.

The school mission, when put into practice, should evoke a sense of shared purpose among staff members, students, and community.

All secondary school principals delegate some responsibility for instructional supervision and curricular coordination, but research and experience suggest that the instructional leadership function in many secondary schools is exercised in a fragmented and inconsistent manner. Those to whom instructional leadership has been delegated are often unclear about the exact nature and extent of their tasks, authority, and responsibilities. In addition, many subordinates have not developed the skills to carry out their responsibilities effectively.

Thus, delegation often results in uneven and inconsistent performance of the instructional leadership role—exactly what principals have been admonished to avoid.

Once aware of this situation, the principal may try to provide strong instructional leadership by reducing delegation, centralizing the role, and becoming the strong instructional leader. And so the circle is complete.

What perpetuates this vicious circle is not the personal inadequacy of the high school principal, but the inadequate development of the instructional leadership capacity of the school. Principals who delegate instructional leadership functions must clarify role expectations and provide the necessary training and support to ensure that subordinates have the skills necessary to perform the tasks.

A major impediment to effective delegation is the absence of an agreed-upon language for discussing the elements of the instructional leadership role. Thus, the first step in forging an effective team is to develop a common definition of instructional leadership.

Defining Instructional Leadership

Instructional leadership includes three dimensions:

- Defining the school mission
- Managing the instructional program
- Promoting the school learning climate.

Each dimension contains several more narrowly conceived job functions. For example, the dimension *defining a school mission* includes two instructional leadership functions: framing school goals and communicating school goals. In turn, each job function includes a variety of representative principal practices and behaviors (Hallinger and Murphy, 1985,1987; Hallinger et al., 1983). This framework of instructional leadership is displayed in Figure 1. A brief definition of each dimension of this framework is provided.

- *Defining the school mission.* Instructional leaders have a clear vision of what the school is trying to accomplish and become. Defining the school mission entails leading the staff members in the development of a mission and communicating this mission to the entire school community. The mission should reflect the primary value orientation of the school. The following slogans encapsulize the value orientations of somewhat longer school mission statements: "together we can"; "all children can learn"; "... school, a fun place, a learning place."

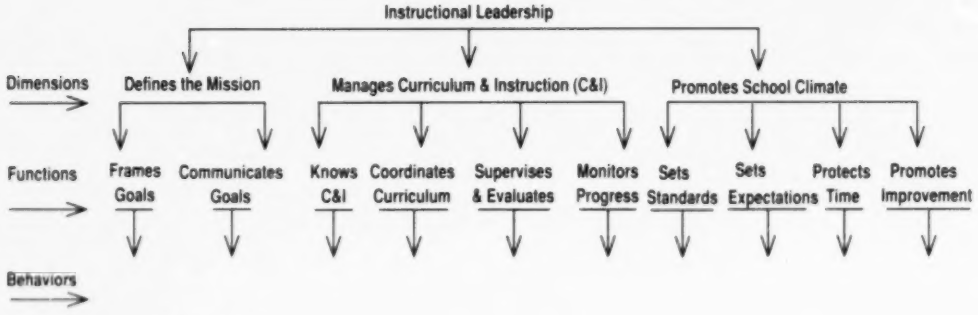
  The school mission, when put into practice, should evoke a sense of shared purpose among staff members, students, and community. This common commitment unites all the school's activities. School goals evolve from the mission, specifying the more specific areas of schoolwide focus. The development of a few annual, schoolwide goals delineates responsibility, promotes accountability, and provides a unifying framework for instructional improvement.

- *Managing the instructional program.* Instructional leaders work closely with staff members in areas specifically related to the evaluation, development, and monitoring of curriculum and instruction. Traditionally, instructional management has been defined as instructional supervision and evaluation.

  Research on effective schools indicates, however, that instructional leaders should pay equal, if not greater, attention to two other related functions: coordinating the curriculum and monitoring student progress. Instructional leaders coordinate curriculum by ensuring that students receive appropriate instruction in areas identified by the school, district, and state. Monitoring student progress both within indi-

Figure 1

Instructional Leadership Framework*



*From Hallinger and Murphy, 1987, p. 56

vidual classrooms and across grades is an equally potent, though underemphasized, area of instructional leadership activity.

- *Promoting a positive climate.* School learning climate refers to the norms and attitudes of the staff members and students that influence learning in the school. Instructional leaders shape the learning climate through both direct and indirect activities. The key functions within this dimension include:

  —Maintaining high visibility in order to communicate priorities and model expectations

  —Creating a reward system that reinforces academic achievement and productive effort

  —Establishing clear, explicit standards for students and staff that embody the school's expectations of students

  —Protecting instructional time from interruptions and promoting the effective use of instructional time in classrooms

  — Selecting, supporting, and participating in high quality staff development programs consistent with the school's annual program goals.

A coordinated program and a moderate level of consistency in the standards and expectations communicated throughout the school support teacher effectiveness and foster student growth.

This framework incorporates the major instructional leadership responsibilities that must be carried out to promote the ability of teachers to effectively instruct students across the many departments in a high school. A principal can use this framework with members of an instructional leadership team to allocate and clarify areas of individual and collective responsibility, assess the leadership needs of the school, and focus staff development efforts.

Allocation of Roles

A major problem faced by principals who delegate instructional leadership tasks is the lack of clear areas of responsibility. The framework described above can be used to address this problem. Principals can allocate task responsibilities to assistant principals, department chairs, supervisors, and teachers according to the various leadership functions.

Instructional leadership teams can be organized in different configurations based on the needs of the school and the skills and roles of existing personnel. A principal in a small high school may choose to form one instructional leadership team composed of assistant principals and department chairpersons. Alternatively, the principal in a larger high school with a complex array of programs may wish to coordinate instructional leadership functions through a central leadership team and delegate specific areas of responsibility to subunits.

In the latter case, general meetings might be held with the full team to discuss issues of curricular coordination or monitoring student progress, but a subunit might meet to discuss teacher evaluation results.

The organization of the instructional leadership team is also related to the allocation of responsibilities. From the principal's perspective, there are three ways in which instructional leadership responsibilities can be allocated.

First, the team can be collectively responsible for all or part of an instructional leadership function. For example, a principal may determine that all members of the team share the common task of communicating school goals. Functional responsibilities shared by all members are delineated in terms of general policies and more specific practices.

Table 1

Sample Allocation of Instructional Leadership Functions

Instructional Leadership Team #1

Members: Principal, Assistant Principal, Student Activities Coordinator, Director of Counseling Services, Media Specialist, Department Leaders

Functions: Framing School Goals, Coordinating Curriculum, Developing Academic Standards, Promoting Professional Development, Monitoring Student Performance

Instructional Leadership Team #2

Members: Principal, Assistant Principal

Functions: Supervising and Evaluating Instruction

Principal

Functions: Communicating School Goals, Protecting Instructional Time, Providing Incentives for Students and Teachers, Promoting Professional Development

Assistant Principal

Functions: Protecting Instructional Time

Developed by Harriet Blanton, principal, and the staff at North Myrtle Beach (S.C.) High School.

Second, individual members of the team can assume responsibility for selected functions. For example, department chairpersons may be responsible for instructional supervision or curriculum coordination for their departments.

Third, the principal may maintain full authority over a specific function. Thus, a principal might choose or be required by policy to personally evaluate nontenured teachers.

The particular manner in which instructional leadership functions are allocated will vary from school to school. In this model, the principal's greatest challenges as instructional leader are finding the proper balance of delegation and control, and developing the capacity of team members to carry out their roles. To illustrate, an example of how one high school organizes and allocates responsibilities is shown in Table 1.

Assessing Instructional Leadership

After the team has been organized and roles have been clarified, the principal must ensure that members have the necessary skills to perform their roles successfully. Unfortunately, assistant principals, department chairpersons, and other supervisors seldom receive the type of training and development needed to meet the high expectations currently held for instructional leaders.

To systematically develop the instructional leadership capacity of the school, it is useful for the principal to obtain a reading of the degree to which the various functions are currently being performed. This instructional leadership profile can then be used to determine priorities for intervention and provide a baseline for the evaluation of professional improvement efforts.

The instructional leadership framework described earlier was used to develop an instrument that assesses the instructional leadership of an individual principal or of an instructional leadership team (Hallinger and Murphy, 1985, 1987).

The Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (PIMRS) defines each of the job functions displayed in Figure 1 in terms of specific practices and behaviors. The instrument contains 50 statements of specific instructional leadership behaviors. The practices that make up each job function in the PIMRS do not represent the full range of behaviors necessary to provide instructional leadership; rather, each job function contains a representative sample of critical behaviors.

Respondents indicate the degree to which they perceive the specific practice was performed during the prior school year (e.g., the extent to which "needs assessment or other methods have been used to secure staff input on the development of school goals"). Answers are displayed on a five-point Likert scale ranging from "Almost Never" (1) to "Almost Always" (5).[1]

The PIMRS can be administered to the principal and members of an instructional leadership team as a self-assessment instrument. If desired, supervisors and teachers can also be asked to complete the instrument to provide contrasting perspectives on the school's instructional leadership. Ideally, this is done after responsibilities have been allocated among team members.

1. The PIMRS is a copyrighted instrument. Researchers and practitioners interested in using the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale should contact Philip Hallinger, Director, Center for Advanced Study of Educational Leadership, Peabody College of Education, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tenn. 37203; (615) 343-7092.

The PIMRS is scored by calculating the mean for each job function. A higher score on a function suggests more active instructional leadership in that area. Higher ratings across the various job functions are interpreted as more active instructional leadership.

It should be emphasized that PIMRS ratings measure perceptions of leadership activity, not quality of instructional leadership. The ratings are compiled into a profile that can assist in diagnosing areas of need and determining areas for practical intervention and professional improvement. A sample instructional leadership profile is displayed in Figure 2.

Diagnosing Leadership Needs Across the School

Initially, the instructional leadership profile is used to diagnose the instructional leadership needs across the school. For example, the profile may indicate great strength in the areas of framing goals and communicating goals, but relative weakness in the areas of curricular coordination and providing incentives for learning. This would suggest areas for collective attention among members of the instructional leadership team. The principal may wish to collect additional information, formally or informally, to validate these perceptions.

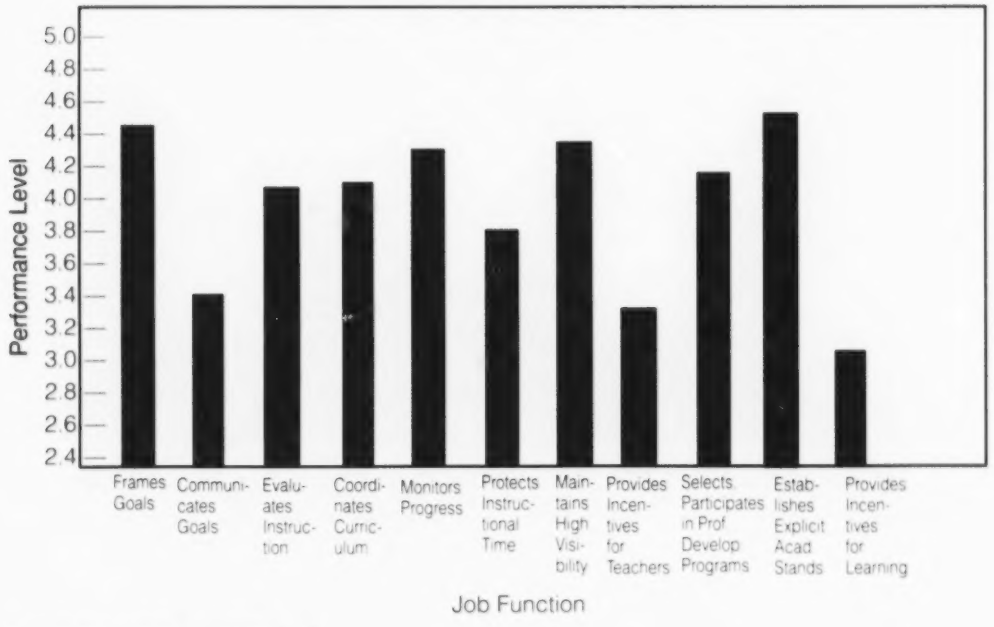
After task responsibilities have been allocated and members of the team are confident the leadership profile is accurate, the principal can take a coordinated approach to team development. On functions where task responsibility is collectively shared (e.g., communicating school goals), the team determines specific steps all members can take to strengthen schoolwide leadership on this function. This may entail development of new school policies or practices, closer attention to the implementation of current policy, or whatever the team feels is appropriate to address the need.

On functions where task responsibility is primarily delegated (e.g., curriculum coordination and instructional supervision to assistant principals and department chairpersons), an individualized plan is developed.

For example, when instructional leadership profiles are analyzed by department, the principal may find that certain chairpersons require assistance and support, while others do not. Or, the profile may suggest the need for skill refinement in instructional supervision among all chairpersons. The principal may then choose to provide the training directly, or arrange for staff develop-

Figure 2

Sample Profile from the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale



From Hallinger & Murhpy 1987, p. 58

ment through other channels. In either case, the principal assumes the leadership role of staff developer, working collaboratively to improve the effectiveness of the school's instructional leadership team.

In one instance, a high school principal, using this approach, identified supervision and evaluation as an area in which he and his staff needed to develop additional expertise. This was also consistent with a broader schoolwide goal of improving the classroom instruction of teachers. He scheduled monthly professional development sessions for his instructional leadership team at which they worked together developing their instructional supervision skills.

Eventually, team members took responsibility for making monthly presentations on effective instructional practices at faculty meetings, an unanticipated outcome of their own professional development activities.

The effectiveness of the team's interventions in school policy and practice and the impact of leadership development efforts provided to team members can be assessed by the principal. The PIMRS profile provides the baseline data for such evaluations. Annual or biannual administration of the PIMRS or a similar scale can be used to profile the team's progress and assess its development. Performance feedback to the team collectively as well as to individual members is critical to the effective functioning and development of the group.

Conclusion

This model starts from the premise that the high school principal's instructional leadership role differs from the centralized leadership role portrayed in the literature of effective elementary schools. In the real world of secondary schools, principals assume direct responsibility for selected instructional leadership functions, but must delegate partial or full responsibility for other functions to subordinates. This results in diffusion, rather than centralization, of the instructional leadership role in the school. From this perspective, the secondary school principal's instructional leadership role is appropriately viewed as a "leader of leaders."[2]

In no way does this conclusion diminish the high school principal's responsibility for exercising instructional leadership. Instructional leadership is just as critical to the development of quality high schools as elementary schools. The approach presented here, however, shifts the high school principal's attention to those areas where it will have the most impact. For the most part, this entails the systematic development of a leadership team that has the capacity to provide coordination in a large, complex organization. The principal is the initiator and leader of the team and remains responsible for its performance.

This approach to instructional leadership in secondary schools releases the principal from the double bind created from the unattainable expectations fostered by research on effective elementary schools and the constraining characteristics of high schools as large, complex, political organizations. It is unlikely that the mythical version of the principal as instructional leader will find a home in many secondary schools. It is, however, possible for high school principals to become effective instructional leaders by developing the leadership capacity of staff members.

The model presented here represents one potentially powerful method of applying research on effective instructional leadership to the secondary level when implemented in an organized, thoughtful manner.

2. See Larry Cuban's *The Managerial Imperative and the Practice of Leadership in Schools* (1988) for an insightful examination of pressures that limit the practice of school leadership and discussion of other conceptions of the school leader's role.

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The Principal as Leader: Promoting Values, Empowering Teachers

By Richard DuFour and Robert Eaker

Although many similarities exist, the important differences between the worlds of business and education should be neither ignored nor minimized.

The education of a child is not equivalent to the production of an automobile. The inputs in the world of education are infinitely more complex than those of the world of work. A failed experiment in the schooling of children cannot be written off to research and development with the same nonchalance that business can apply to an unsuccessful product line.

Most important, the measures of educational effectiveness are far more elusive than the measures that industry can use to gauge its success.

One of the most consistent findings in the studies of excellent businesses is the importance of leadership. Bennis and Nanus (1985) state simply that "organizations cannot be successful without effective leadership . . . the key factor in the ability of a business to translate its vision into reality."

Even Peters and Waterman (1982), who insist that excellent companies achieve their excellence through the extraordinary efforts of "ordinary people," acknowledge that these companies "have been truly blessed with unusual leadership."

The effective schools research echoes this importance of leadership to the organization, particularly the leadership of the principal. As Jane Eisner (1979) concluded after visiting schools across the country: "The key to a school's success is the 'principal principle': the notion that a strong administrator with vision and with ability to carry out his or her goals can make an enormous difference in a school." That sentiment is repeated again and again in the effective schools research.

But what is the role of the principal? Some authors describe the principalship in terms of its functions, while others focus on the principalship in terms of the various publics with which the principal must work.

However, the recent research findings on effective organizations, effective leaders, and effective schools call for a new definition of the principalship, a definition that recognizes the four major roles and responsibilities of the principal:

- Values promoter and protector
- Teacher empowerer
- Instructional leader
- Climate manager.

The Principal as Values Promoter and Protector

Excellent schools base their efforts on explicit, widely understood statements of vision and values. However, the articulation of vision and values will not have a significant impact on schools unless the principals realize that the promotion and protection of those values are among their most essential responsibilities.

If that responsibility is to be met, several factors must characterize the leadership of the school:

- *Effective Leaders Know What They Want*

In his Pulitzer Prize-winning study of leadership, James McGregor Burns (1978) advises that the first step a leader must take if he hopes to influence others is to clarify his own goals. It is impossible for an organization to remain focused on its vision and values unless its leaders are certain of what the vision and values entail.

In short, leaders must know what they want to accomplish. Bennis and Nanus (1985) put it this way:

> Leaders are the most results-oriented individuals in the world. . . . This fixation with and undeviating attention to outcome—

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some would call it an obsession—is only possible if one knows what he wants.

This clarity of purpose is particularly important in public schools that have been called on to cure every ill and solve every social problem. Too often, state legislatures or boards of education send the message that "everything is important, pay attention to everything." As a result, nothing is done well. A clear, purposeful focus is one of the most urgent needs facing our schools. A principal who provides the focus necessary to clarify a school's mission has eliminated a major barrier to school improvement.

- *Effective Leaders Communicate What They Want*

Vision and values can only influence an organization and those within it if the vision and values are communicated. In fact, Bennis and Nanus conclude that "the mastery of communication is inseparable from effective leadership."

What are the keys to communication that attract and inspire? Peters and Waterman (1982) argue that one key is redundancy—a "boorish consistency over long periods of time in support of . . . one or two transcending values."

Thus, unlike most school administrators who begin each school year with an explanation of what is new in the way of procedures and policies, effective principals will emphasize what remains the same—the vision and values that direct the efforts of those within their school.

Furthermore, effective principals follow the advice of Bennis and Nanus and use slogans and metaphors to clarify their message. For example, the principal of a high school that has made academic achievement its primary emphasis has a knack for including the school's slogan, "Where Minds Matter Most," in both his written and oral communications.

However, principals could use every available opportunity and the most creative metaphors to articulate the values of their schools and still be ineffective communicators unless the positions they take on a day-to-day basis are consistent with those values.

- *Effective Leaders Build Trust by Maintaining a Consistent Position*

Bennis and Nanus describe trust as the "lubricant that makes it possible for organizations to work," and contend that leaders can establish trust only by being "the epitome . . . of constancy, of reliability."

Effective leaders are predictable. They establish positions that are consistent with organizational values, make those positions known, and remain relentlessly committed to them. They "stay the course."

The actions of leaders, not their exhortations, are what communicate most clearly. Certain observable behaviors suggest what is truly important to a school principal. Any assessment of a principal's effectiveness in communicating values should include the following questions:

1. *What does the principal plan for?* Does the principal develop long-term plans that are consistent with the mission of the school and designed to instill its values? Does he or she share those plans with the staff and help them see the relationship between the plans and the mission? Does his or her daily planning provide an opportunity to concentrate on the factors that are most critical in advancing the school toward its vision?

2. *What does the principal monitor?* In their study of effective business leadership, Peters and Austen (1985) argue that simply paying attention to what is important is the most powerful means by which a leader can communicate to and influence others. They repeat the message, "Attention is all there is."

   That message is an important one for principals to note. A principal who devotes considerable time and effort to the continual assessment of a particular condition within a school sends the message that the condition is both important and valued.

   Conversely, inattention to monitoring a particular factor indicates that the factor is less than essential regardless of how often its importance is verbalized.

3. *What does the principal model?* Principals who truly believe that the presence of certain values is critical to the success of their schools will attempt to model those values in their own behavior. A principal who asks teachers and students to be considerate of one another should model consideration in his or her dealings with all members of the school community. A school that claims to value its teachers should have a principal who treats them as professionals.

   In short, effective principals make a conscious effort to embody the values of the schools they lead.

4. *What does the principal reinforce through recognition and celebration?* Deal and Kennedy (1982) contend that the values of an organization must be celebrated if they are to survive. One of the most critical and powerful means of communicating and reinforcing values is constant attention to celebrating their presence within the organization.

   A principal who seeks to communicate values will seek to recognize and reinforce those who act in accordance with those values. As Kanter points out, this public attention is important not only for the individual who receives it, but

also for others in the organization who see "that the things they might contribute will be noticed, applauded, and remembered" (1983).

However, one caveat is in order before leaving the subject of celebration. Brookover (1982) contends that principals often recognize and praise teachers for factors unrelated to effective instruction, "for not bothering the principal or for doing other pleasant and desirable things, such as having an attractive room, being well dressed, or being the life of the Friday afternoon get-together."

Celebration of behavior and attitudes that are unassociated with the values of the school will send messages that are at best confusing and at worst counterproductive. Celebration can be a powerful factor in promoting particular values within a school, but the principal must ensure that association between the celebration and the values is clear.

5. *What behavior is the principal willing to confront?* Although excellent companies encourage and reward individual autonomy, they insist that core values are observed and are willing to confront those who disregard such values. Their advocacy of these values is described as "rigid," "nonnegotiable," "inflexible," and "fanatical." If principals wish to communicate the importance of particular values, they must be willing to confront those who disregard those values.

Principals who claim to value teaching directed to particular student outcomes must be willing to confront the teacher whose instruction does not address those outcomes. Principals who claim to value the "best effort" of teachers and students must be willing to confront those who give less.

Confrontation is not synonymous with personal attack, hostile discussion, or threats. Peters and Austen describe it as:

> a form of counseling in which the alternatives and consequences are clear and close at hand . . . a face-to-face meeting where you bring an individual's attention to the consequences of unacceptable performance.... Confronting recognizes that a change is imperative.

Nevertheless, the word "confront" may seem jarring to principals who have traditionally been urged to promote a collegial, cooperative working relationship with their teachers.

Furthermore, principals are people, too, and feel the basic human desire to have the approval and esteem of those with whom they work. Confrontation seems both anti-collegial and unlikely to result in the approval of the person who is challenged.

Nevertheless, the principal who seeks to lead will place the values of the school above the desire for popularity. Bennis and Nanus describe this ability to do without the constant approval and recognition of others as one of the keys to leadership.

James MacGregor Burns puts it this way:

> . . . no matter how strong this yearning for unanimity . . . (leaders) must settle for far less than universal affection. . . . They must accept conflict. They must be willing and able to be unloved.

Principals must be willing to advise students, parents, or staff members when their conduct violates the values of the school if those values are to be communicated in a clear and unequivocal manner. As Peters and Austen conclude, "Quite simply, nothing reduces the manager's credibility faster than the unwillingness to address an obvious problem."

The Principal as Teacher Empowerer

What is "empowerment"? Kanter describes it as "the degree to which the opportunity to use power effectively is granted or withheld from individuals." More simply, it is the opportunity to act upon one's ideas.

Those who have examined the practices of the nation's most outstanding businesses have consistently cited the fact that these companies are committed to empowering their work force and agree with Kanter, who contends that empowerment of the work force is "one operative difference between those companies that stagnate and those that innovate."

Of course a necessary condition for empowering employees is a willingness on the part of supervisors to delegate authority and redefine their role from the giver of orders to the developer of human potential.

Garfield (1986) found that successful business leaders believe the more they empower others the more they are able to achieve, and thus, the more successful the entire enterprise can become.

Unfortunately, a recent survey of more than 8,500 teachers indicates that this concept of empowerment has not been widely embraced by school leaders. Only 28 percent of the teachers surveyed could be classified as "empowered." More than 85 percent of the respondents believed that quality of instruction would improve if they were allowed to increase their involvement in curriculum decisions. Only 3 of 10 teachers reported that they were involved in textbook decisions, and 80 percent said they were never involved in who gets hired in the school.

If schools are to make teacher empowerment the basis of school improvement as the Carnegie

Foundation recommends, principals must embrace Garfield's finding that "power given is power gained." They must be willing to break from the bureaucratic, hierarchical structure that has characterized public schooling and give consideration to how they can empower their teachers.

They must develop the skills that Garfield concludes are essential to successful empowerment: delegating, stretching the abilities of others, and encouraging educated risk taking.

Here are some specific areas of teacher empowerment that principals should consider.

- *Developing the Curriculum.* Teachers responsible for delivering a curriculum should play a major role in its development. Teachers should be called upon to arrive at a consensus as to what student outcomes should be achieved in the grade or in the subject they specialize in, and then should be held accountable for achieving those outcomes.
- *Assessing Student Achievement.* Teachers should be key decisionmakers in developing the strategies for monitoring schoolwide achievement. If locally developed tests are to be used, teachers should work collectively to develop them. If standardized achievement tests are to be used, teachers should help select the tests that best fit the school curriculum. If alternative assessment strategies are to be used (for example, writing folders, portfolios, rating scales, etc.), teachers should be primarily responsible for developing the specifics of those strategies.

To force a particular mode of instruction on teachers robs them of both their professionalism and the autonomy they need to be effective.

- *Selecting Instructional Materials.* It seems self-evident that those who will be called upon to use particular textbooks, equipment, and materials should also have the opportunity to have the major voice in their selection. But, as Peters and Austen conclude, the idea that decisions should be turned over to the people who must do the work is both disarmingly simple and seldom put into practice.
- *Planning and Presenting Staff Development Programs.* In most schools, if teachers are involved in the planning of the staff development program at all, that involvement is limited to a survey of their interest in potential topics. Too often administrators select both the staff development topic and those who present that topic to a passive teaching staff.However, in one innovative school system the principal established certain parameters for the staff development program and then invited faculty members who were recognized as having a particular interest or expertise in topics selected by the faculty to work in teams of two or three to develop the program for that area.

These teams assumed full responsibility for all the decisions regarding their programs. Each team had to decide how they would make their colleagues aware of the objectives and activities of their program, what funding would be required and how it would be allocated, whether to use local or outside speakers and resources, what materials they would require, and how they would evaluate the effectiveness of their program.

The role of the principal was critical—providing each team with such support as time for planning, an adequate budget, and encouragement.

- *Determining Instructional Styles and Strategies.* Although a principal can and should establish parameters for classroom instruction (for example, teachers will teach to the specified student outcomes, will make full use of the instructional period, will ensure that all students are actively engaged in the lesson, etc.), those parameters should stop short of mandating particular teaching styles.

Some teachers thrive on individualized instruction, others are proponents of cooperative learning in small groups, and still others are both comfortable and successful with large-group instruction. To force a particular mode of instruction on teachers robs them of both their professionalism and the autonomy they need to be effective.

Certainly, teachers should be encouraged to expand their repertoire and attempt to develop new skills. Principals should discourage teaching behaviors that are contrary to the findings of the research on effective teaching. However, it is the substance—the results—of teaching that principals should concern themselves with rather than the style. Responsibility for day-to-day instructional decisions should remain with the teacher.

- *Scheduling.* Scheduling is a bone of contention at virtually all levels of public schooling. Elementary school teachers are upset about who gets which students and about students being "pulled out" of their classrooms for special programs in art, music, reading, etc. High school teachers compare class sizes and scrutinize who gets assigned to teach which course.

Why shouldn't teachers be invited to make these decisions collectively? Not only would they come to a better understanding of the difficulties inherent in scheduling, their collective deliberations might result in workable ideas to resolve some of those difficulties.

- *Hiring New Staff.* Teachers should play a role in the interviewing and selection of their col-

leagues, particularly if they will be called upon to work closely with the new staff member. If teachers at a particular grade level or in a particular subject are expected to coordinate their efforts, they should have an opportunity to participate in the selection of their new team member.

- *Mentoring.* One of the most important factors in the success of any organization is its effectiveness in helping new members understand its culture, or as Deal and Kennedy (1982) put it, "the way we do things around here."

Teachers new to a school have always believed (and rightfully so) that the best source of information in this regard was other teachers. Nevertheless, the formal programs that administrators have developed to orient and acculturate new members of a faculty have consistently failed to utilize veteran teachers.

The mentoring program established by one high school offers a refreshing exception to this general rule. Each new teacher is assigned a mentor who is then responsible for teaching the newcomer "how we do things around here."

The mentors provide instruction and advice in virtually all areas of the school's operation, from such mundane matters as how to order chalk to more substantive issues such as assessing student achievement.

Mentors introduce their new charges to the school's teacher evaluation program by observing them in the classroom and giving them feedback on their teaching performance. This peer coaching takes place prior to the initiation of formal evaluation procedures by the administration. The program has received rave reviews not only from the new teachers but from the mentors themselves.

Using Teams To Empower Teachers

One of the most effective spurs to innovation and ownership is the formation of small units or teams within the larger organization. Outstanding companies have recognized this fact and have made excellent use of these small coalitions.

As Kanter observed: "Whether called 'task forces,' 'quality circles,' 'problem-solving groups,' or 'shared responsibility teams' such vehicles for greater participation are an important part of an innovating company."

Naisbitt and Aburdene (1985) cite the movement away from authoritarian hierarchy to "smaller teams where people manage themselves" as one of the most fundamental shifts occurring in industry. Deal and Kennedy predict that the small-team concept will characterize the organizations of the future.

The organization and use of small teams is a particularly promising possibility for schools. Traditional personnel arrangements in schools (a faculty or a department) obscure the accomplishments and blunt the entrepreneurial spirit of the individual teacher. The crafting of coalitions and building of teams can heighten the teacher's sense of joint involvement, contribution to decisions, responsibility, and power.

Teams can be formed in a number of different ways. We offer just a few examples:

- By grade level or subject level. For example, all sophomore English teachers could assume responsibility for the areas of empowerment described in the previous section.
- By similar teaching assignment. For example, all teachers of accelerated or remedial students could work to develop or coordinate common expectations, materials, assignments, disciplinary consequences, methods of evaluation, etc.
- Interdepartmentally. For example, all freshman-level teachers of courses in the humanities could work to develop particular themes to be emphasized across departments.
- In schoolwide task forces. For example, small groups of teachers could be formed to consider a particular problem and develop recommendations to resolve it.

There are a number of advantages to using the small-team concept. These include:

- Individuals have a greater sense of control and thus, a greater personal involvement
- Peer group pressure, which Deal and Kennedy describe as "the single, strongest motivating factor for individuals in this post-industrial era," is accentuated in the small group structure
- It is well suited to building consensus
- It allows for the development of the leadership potential of a large number of teachers.

The utilization of small groups can be overdone and/or done badly. In some instances, overeager administrators have attempted to demonstrate their endorsement of the participatory, small-group process by convening task forces to consider the most trivial of issues.

Surveys of teachers have consistently revealed that while teachers *do* want to be included in deciding substantive issues, they *do not* wish to be involved in every decision.

Another problem in the use of groups is the failure to provide members with a clear purpose and well-defined parameters. The most common error, however, is to assign responsibilities to a group but fail to provide its members with the authority to fulfill them.

Empowering Champions

Effective principals will also pay particular attention to the important task of identifying and empowering champions—the zealous advocates who are willing to become personally committed to the success of an idea.

Conventional wisdom in educational administration has held that principals should not proceed with change until they have the approval (or at least the acquiescence) of everyone who will be affected. However, Peters and Waterman found that it was the presence of champions—"monomaniacs with a mission"—that was the key to initiating and sustaining change within successful business organizations.

The same is true in education. The eventual outcome of an innovation rests more on the advocacy of an eager champion than the passive approval of an entire staff.

In fact, principals should be hesitant to proceed with an idea until a champion has embraced it. Thus, the recognition, encouragement, and nurturing of champions becomes a key factor in an effort to improve a school.

What Empowerment Is Not

Empowerment is not simply turning people loose and hoping for the best. Peters and Waterman found that the corporate advocates of empowering the work force were not *laissez-faire* leaders; they remained obsessed with outcome.

In fact, Ren McPherson of Dana Corporation supports empowerment precisely because it eliminates excuses for failure to perform. People can't blame failure on the decisions of others when they are free to decide how to complete a task.

Thus, the principal who sets out to empower his or her teachers must, at the same time, demand that the values of the school are observed and continually monitor the progress the school is making toward its vision.

We recognize that the image of the principal as both a relentless, autocratic protector of values and as a transformational leader seeking new ways to empower teachers is somewhat ambiguous and paradoxical. However, Peters and Waterman regard the ability to conceptualize and manage this ambiguity and paradox as a key to successful leadership and successful organizations.

Schools must be both "loose" and "tight." Principals must encourage innovation and insist on compliance. They must remember the advice of Rosabeth Moss Kanter who writes:

> Freedom is not the absence of structure—letting employees go off and do whatever they want—but rather a clear structure which enables people to work within established boundaries in a creative and autonomous way.

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Delegation: A Skill Necessary in School-Based Management

By William C. Thomas

Delegation is a skill that can be perfected, and effective methods of delegating tasks within the school can and should be a part of the training of prospective school administrators. Poorly done or mismanaged delegation processes in the school setting can create problems and can also damage the confidence and morale of staff members.

Why Delegate?

When the question of why a principal would find it essential to develop skills in delegation is asked, the standard answer is that the principal does not have the time to accomplish all the tasks assigned and, therefore, must delegate some of the responsibilities to subordinates.

Preserving time for other tasks is a good reason for administrators to delegate, and it becomes increasingly important as districts implement school-based management techniques into their operating processes. Failure to delegate or ineffective delegating will seriously impair or defeat the advantages of school-based management.

In addition to conserving his or her time, a principal should also consider delegation an integral part of the inservice training program for other members of the school staff. A primary responsibility of a secondary school principal is the preparation of other members of the administrative team for advancement. Much of this preparation can be accomplished by effectively delegating carefully selected tasks in order to provide "hands on" experience and seasoning for other staff members. A wide variety of tasks should be given to sub-administrators and prospective administrators in order to broaden their skills and equip them for advancement.

Another significant reason for delegating specific tasks to others is that there may be staff members who possess skills or talents that would enable them to perform particular jobs very effectively. Delegating tasks to such people will increase the efficiency of the operation as well as provide staff members with recognition for their talents.

What To Delegate?

An essential consideration in effective delegation is the careful selection of tasks and areas of responsibility to be delegated. Assigning trivial tasks to others might conserve time, but surely will not accomplish much in the way of giving experience or the chance to use unique talents to others. While it is necessary to delegate some low-skill tasks, it should not be the extent of the delegation process within the school.

Tasks should be carefully selected so they will contribute to the experience and education of others on the staff. This entails a constant awareness of this goal and a frequent examination of what is being delegated. Once a vice principal has planned and executed a successful back-to-school night, the temptation is to make this assignment every year rather than rotating this task among other members of the administrative team.

Another important factor in the selection of tasks to be delegated is the careful consideration of the consequences of an unsuccessful delegation activity. A failed project can result in loss of confidence and/or status by the person doing the task and loss of time, efficiency, or morale to the organization. The wise administrator selects tasks and matches them carefully to the skills of the person to whom the task is delegated so that the probability of success is high.

Steps to Successful Delegation

After carefully selecting tasks and matching them to the abilities and needs of the staff, there are some specific procedures that should be followed.

1. *Clearly Define and Delineate the Task.* Provide a clear definition of the job at the time of delegation. This will frequently include a timeline, limitations and constraints that must be considered, and perhaps a budget. In clearly

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defining the task, care must be taken to describe limits but not to structure the jobs so finely that there is no room for the person to develop initiative and to learn from the assignment.

2. *Give Authority with the Delegation.* If the task involves directing others on the staff and has been delegated to someone not necessarily in a superior administrative position, it is vital that the staff be aware that the authority to accomplish the task has been granted.

3. *Let the Person Do the Job.* A frequent error in the delegation process is to either oversupervise or to unnecessarily become involved in the project after it has been delegated. If you desire a mid-project progress report, specify this at the time the task is delegated. Confidence is shaken and frustration can result from the delegator becoming unnecessarily involved during the time the task is being completed.

4. *Make the Person Do the Job.* Sometimes, lack of confidence may cause a person to repeatedly return for direction about the project that has been delegated. Of course, you must give help when needed, but a statement such as, "I wouldn't have asked you to do this job if I didn't have confidence in your ability," would be appropriate as well.

5. *Accept the Job as Done.* Unless it is a total disaster, the task should be accepted as done. This is sometimes difficult, for the task probably will not be done just the way you would have done it. If you have suggestions for improvement they may be offered in private, but the job should be accepted and used as developed if at all possible. A critique and evaluation after the project is completed can be helpful in the learning process.

6. *Give Credit.* If the task was done successfully, good administrative practice dictates that public acknowledgment be given. Of course, if the project didn't work out well, the correct pronoun to be used is "we," and the administrator should share in the responsibility.

Other Forms of Delegation

Job descriptions and minutes of meetings are two other parts of the delegation process in the schools. Considering these functions in light of the goals of delegation can increase the effectiveness of the administrative process.

Job descriptions for the various members of the administrative team, in effect, are a delegating of those tasks to individuals on the staff. Careful thought should be given to the rotation of many of the assignments among the various members of the staff. If the principal considers the training of members of the administrative team for more responsible tasks important, then he or she will keep this in mind as job descriptions are developed and reviewed.

The minutes of planning meetings provide another delegation tool to the principal. If, for instance, you are going to have a meeting of the various staff members involved with graduation, the minutes can, and should, function as a form of delegation. These minutes should leave no doubt as to what tasks have been assigned, to whom they were assigned, and any specific factors that are germane to getting the tasks done.

Conclusion

Delegation is a process used frequently by school administrators. Using delegation properly can greatly increase the efficiency of the operation and can be a significant factor in the staff development process.

The Assistant Principal's Responsibility in School-Based Management Systems

By Molly J. Clemons

Gone soon will be the days when assistant principals are solely in charge of potty patrol schedules, cafeteria supervision, parking lot duty, and discipline. Just as effective teaching techniques become the models in the classroom, school-based management techniques will raise the effectiveness of assistant principals.

More management duties are being assigned to assistant principals as school-based management becomes more widely used. But, assistant principals are also suggesting areas that they want to supervise, because assistant principals are becoming part of a management team with control and the "final say" in many areas.

Another way of stating this might be that school-based management means "custodians are involved in solving custodial problems, teachers in solving classroom problems, principals in solving building-wide problems, and superintendents in making district-wide decisions."[1]

Because more responsibility is being placed in the hands of principals, more responsibility must necessarily be placed with assistant principals. Principals will not be able to conduct all teacher and staff evaluations, have time to be a specialist in all curriculum matters, and still sit in on every necessary meeting.

Increasing Leadership Roles

Assistant principals are being taken out of subordinate roles and placed in more highly regarded leadership positions. For example, several years ago the principal would have been expected to do all evaluation of certified staff members. Although some states and districts may have required several class visits and informal and formal observations each year, others were more lax. A principal might have visited a nontenured teacher once a semester or year. When the teacher became tenured, the principal would never, or seldom, evaluate the teacher again unless requested to do so for a specific problem.

Today, a nontenured teacher will probably have two formal evaluations and at least one or two informal observations each year. Reaching tenure might take two to five years in different states. A tenured teacher will receive at least one informal observation/evaluation a year, and possibly one formal evaluation (with one or more observations) every three years.

If principals were responsible for conducting all these observations and evaluations, they would have little time for anything else. Thus, assistant principals must take an active role in conducting and carrying out staff evaluations.

And the evaluations are no longer limited to teachers. Districts are requiring more extensive evaluations of the secretarial staff, custodians, activity advisers, and coaches.

Many schools, especially those utilizing school-based management, have at least one or more advisory boards. One might be composed of parents, while another operates as a teacher council. Others may also have a student advisory board. Their emphasis might be financial, curricular, staff development, or one of several other areas.

Divided Responsibilities

Either the principal or assistant principal must attend the meetings and play an active role in them. One or the other is usually the liaison with the Parent Teacher Association as well. The communications responsibility here might be divided with the principal and assistants attending alternate meetings of each board.

Most schools have a social committee or a teacher committee that oversees the funds for expressions of sympathy, congratulatory items, re-

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1. American Association of School Administrators, National Association of Elementary School Principals, and National Association of Secondary School Principals, *School Based Management—A Strategy for Better Learning* (Reston, Va.: NASSP, 1988), p. 5.

tirement gifts, etc. The administration is often the first to know of a death in a teacher's family, the hospitalization of a staff member, or the name of a new baby. The assistant principal might serve as liaison with the committee. But the assistant principal might go one step further and be sure each staff member receives a birthday card from the administration during the school year or summer. Thank-you notes can go a long way, too. These positive forms of communication can mean a great deal.

School-based management theories also say decisions made at the building level will include "developing educational priorities for the school, developing new programs to meet the school's specific problems, developing scheduling, allocating a school's resources, deciding professional development programs for the faculty, selecting the supplemental instructional materials for that particular school and selecting applicants for a job from a group of pre-screened candidates."[2] Assistant principals should be more directly involved in these areas if they are not already.

Although assistant principals are and will be assigned duties and delegated specific responsibilities, they might also ask to be directly involved in student activities, scheduling, various aspects of the budget, bus coordination, supply ordering and/or check-in, special education coordination, student/teacher scheduling, inservice programs, and the supervision or monitoring of student teachers.

Typical assistant principal assignments include assigning locks/lockers, discipline, the parent-student handbook, and student pictures. These areas need not be boring. A good assistant principal can re-evaluate these areas—possibly with committee help—and update them and enjoy them a little more.

To simplify many administrative duties, an assistant principal may choose to work through the school's teacher/adviser program, if one exists. If not, it might become a top priority to start such a program. A T/A program, providing a daily home base of 15 minutes or more for students, is not strictly for administrative/bookkeeping duties. The priority should be guidance, counseling, study skills, and/or exploration. The program also provides a cohesive home base "family unit" for however long the student is at the respective school, usually two to four years.

An assistant principal might also take responsibility for faculty attendance awards. Those teachers with perfect attendance might be presented with a plaque, gift certificate, or even a check.

The building-use calendar can be kept by an assistant principal, with custodians notified when the gym, cafeteria, auditorium, or other area will be utilized. Building inspection tours might also be made by the assistant principal and head custodian.

Communication a Priority

Communication is a priority of school-based management, and the parent-student handbook is essential to this process. Parent-student handbooks need not be dull. The assistant principal might contact the publication adviser for photos to use on the cover, and possibly throughout the book. This will create a more welcoming tone for new students.

Because rules and responsibilities are outlined in a handbook, the assistant principal might test the students on the book's contents via a fill-in-the-blank, multiple choice, or other form of quiz. There can be some "fun" questions from the handbook, too, along with some bonus items. The tests can be distributed in last hour classes one day, with students told to complete them at home with parental help. This exercise will ensure that the handbooks are read, and parents will be more aware of their contents.

Every student needs a handbook every year, but does everyone receive one? The assistant principal might initiate a signed card system that acts as a receipt for the handbook. Handbooks could be given out during a long T/A period the first day of school, followed by the reading and signing of the receipt cards. Students enrolling after the first day would receive handbooks and cards from their counselors.

Assistant principals can also improve communication regarding detention times. Small, printed tickets—either made on the school copier or purchased from a school supply printer—make great reminders for students. The student selects (or is assigned) a specific detention day or days. The assistant principal fills out the assignment ticket and enters the information in a master book. The student receives the ticket with date, room number, and day of week marked. The student might also initial the line in the master record. On the day the detention is to be served, a small, printed reminder is sent to the student in T/A. By noon, a master list of detentions for the day is posted, with a copy sent to the teacher or administrator handling the detention hours. If the detention hour must be changed, a parent has until a specific time in the morning (clearly stated in the handbook) to change the date of the detention. No call from a parent—no changes. This eliminates a student running into the office with five minutes left in the day, saying, "I can't stay today," or students requesting change after change for the day the time is to be served.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

Conclusion

As increasing numbers of school districts establish school-based management programs, assistant principals, of necessity, will be assigned more responsibility. Clearly, they will need the same training principals receive. They also should attend state, regional, and national conventions, possibly on a rotation basis with the principal.

The assistant principal's role is expanding and maturing, and in the era of school-based management, it will grow and become a more responsible occupation, with added prestige and respect.

External and Internal Scanning: Identifying Variables That Affect Your School

By Jerry J. Herman

To make decisions that will improve their schools, principals must collect all the pertinent data that might affect the school operations and programs.

If principals and those whom they involve in strategic planning (long-term planning with a future vision) or operational planning (short-term planning consisting of action plans to achieve a specific output or outcome) want to make good decisions, the data collection process must have a systematic internal and external scanning structure.

External scanning involves those items outside the control of the local school and its staff members, while internal scanning involves those variables inside the school building.

Internal Data

The four major sources of internal scanning data are:

- Student-related data
- School-climate-related data
- Finance-related data
- Human-resource-related data.

The data in each of these sets should be analyzed for trends during a period of years, and then projected into the future for planning purposes. Once the data are analyzed and projected, programs can be developed to attain the desired and projected outcomes.

- *Student-related data* should be analyzed and compared to demographic data related to sex, age, socioeconomic levels, and other available pertinent demographics. That is, the achievement data should be disaggregated to determine whether or not various subgroups within the student population are achieving at a level consistent with other subgroups.

For example, perhaps the achievement or course grades in English are higher for girls than for boys, and the achievement level or course grades in social science are higher for boys than for girls. The planners should discover the cause of the discrepancy and devise appropriate intervention strategies.

Student achievement data can be either norm-referenced (how well the local students do in comparison to other groups of students in the nation) or criterion-referenced (how well they can perform a specific item on a pass or fail basis, without any relationship to other groups outside the district). In either case, an item analysis (breaking the test down into each test item or question) is a valuable aid in discovering trends and in identifying areas where the individual, the subgroup, or the total student body has problems or is highly successful.

In all cases, identifying trends toward lower or higher test scores can be useful in identifying successful teaching strategies and problem areas and down-trends that need immediate attention.

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Also, an analysis of outliers (those individuals or groups who score well above or below the standard or expected level) can be investigated to discover unusually successful strategies or to identify unusual causative factors.

Other important student-related data that may assist the local school planners are the number and percentage of dropouts, the number and percentage of course failures, the number and percentage of students who participate in cocurricular activities, and the number of scholarships received by students.

Other data sources include the number of students continuing on to universities and community colleges, the number of students who graduate from advanced education institutions, and the feedback on specific items listed in a student follow-up study.

- *School-climate-related data* are those variables that identify the necessary components for a positive and effective school environment. The building decisionmakers can collect climate data by distributing a well-designed opinion survey, by observing directly, or by measuring the achievement of predetermined desirable climate outcomes.

Climate variables can include a safe and healthy school environment, a climate based on the belief that all students can learn, a climate that expects high student achievement and monitors student results to determine the level of student achievement as a means of continuous focus, a caring relationship for and by students, a trusting relationship, an environment that is permeated by respect for all, and an environment that allows meaningful input from students and staff members.

As is true of student achievement time data, tracking data over an extended period can help identify winning strategies and determine needs (the discrepancy between "what is" and "what should be") to be addressed by intervention strategies. Once these needs are identified, the building-level planners can focus on them and develop action programs to assist in reaching what should be.

- *Finance-related data* include trend data related to financial support, equipment and supplies, and allocation of human resources. Think of the additional financing implications related to increases in programs for handicapped students, female interscholastic sports programs, occupational education, gifted and talented programs, community education and continuing education programs, child care activities, and in many other programs too numerous to mention here.

Again, tracking trends in these data and projecting them into the future will allow the building-level planners to identify the "what is" and develop the "what should be." Once the needs are identified, based on the comparison of what is and what should be, programs can be developed to meet the needs. Many times these programs will identify alternative resources not normally considered, such as developing school-business partnerships or a cadre of volunteers from the pool of retired people in the community.

Once the data requirements for internal scanning are identified, a continuous retrieval system must be put into place. This information retrieval system should be comprehensive, and the data analysis utilized for strategic planning (long-term planning to reach a vision) and operational planning (short-term action planning to achieve a specific output or outcome).

- *Human-resource-related* data are those data that address the quality and quantity of employees, that identify training and staff development needs, and that locate the type of conditions that are prerequisite to acquiring and retaining excellent employees.

These data and the related projections can assist the planners in determining the best placement of employees, in determining the need to begin recruitment efforts to replace employees who are leaving, and in determining the level of knowledge and skill that exists and is necessary for effective employees in the future.

Some examples of needs that can be identified and met through scanning and later inservice training programs include:

- Training in technological advances such as computerization, robotics, and telecommunications techniques that can require massive staff development efforts for all employees
- Clinical supervision training for department heads and principals
- Training in the planning of the curriculum and delivery of instruction techniques, such as curriculum mapping, instructional auditing, and outcome-based or mastery learning approaches
- Staff development training in such program areas as Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement (TESA) and Cooperative Learning
- Retraining of employees whose jobs are eliminated by technology or by reductions in staff employment areas.

External Data

External data should be systematically collected, scanned for trends, and projected for future planning purposes. The five major types of external data are:

- Demographic-related data
- Finance-related data
- Attitude-related data

- Governmental laws, rules and regulations, and policy-related data
- Miscellaneous data that may be peculiar to each school.

• *Demographic-related data* include information about such matters as age of the adults living in the area, the socioeconomic levels of the community, the educational level of the residents, and the numbers of single parents and retired people living in the school attendance area. Trend data such as age can indicate an increasing younger adult population that will, most likely, increase the number of children who will attend school, or an increasing older adult population that will most likely indicate a declining school-aged population.

If the community has an increasingly higher socioeconomic and educational population trend, it could be assumed that there will be a higher interest in education and the adult population will have an increasingly greater ability to pay taxes to support education. In addition, it may be surmised that the human resources in the community would be available to assist in planning activities and would be available to students as out-of-school resources.

Trends toward more single parent families may indicate the need for parenting classes through community education, the need to provide additional counseling for students who do not have the traditional nuclear family to rely upon, or the need to develop additional after-school activities for students. It may also indicate that the school may anticipate and plan for a reduction in adult volunteers.

• *Finance-related data* should include the budgetary allocations from the central school district level, the resources allocated by the state, the resources allocated by the federal government, and the resources available from grants and gifts from a variety of sources.

If the school's programs depend on "soft" or "seed" monies from federal and state level earmarked program sources, plans must be developed to continue the desirable programs if the trend is for less support from the state or federal levels.

On the other hand, if the planners know that legislation is being enacted to meet other unusual needs, such as the need to develop special school programs for at-risk students, they can plan to increase the expenditures for this category of students.

At the school district level, the amount allocated to each building may vary with the aid received from the federal or state levels and with the willingness of taxpayers to vote for additional taxes. In the face of budget cuts, planners must determine program priorities, cut the least crucial programs, or find additional ways to raise monies.

It is possible to raise additional funds through grants from foundations, corporations, or other sources; through donations from booster groups, alumni groups, businesses or industries; or by establishing a foundation that accepts money for the school as specified in the wills of community residents.

• *Attitude-related data* are an important source of gauging the level of community support for school programs and changes and for determining potential support for tax and policy issues. Trend data that indicate decreased support for science programs, for example, may indicate that the community needs more information about the program. In such a case, a marketing strategy should be developed. On the other hand, if the science program is determined to be weak, the staff and representatives of the community should be involved in developing a higher quality science curriculum.

The attitudinal survey will identify those areas of concern in the community, and the local building planners should seriously investigate each of the expressed concerns. Once the concern is investigated, a marketing strategy or an overhaul of the program is necessary. In either case, the community should be provided all the necessary information to allow a turnaround of community attitude.

• *Governmental laws, rules and regulations, and policy-related data* are crucial sources of information. If the numerous federal, state, and local school board actions following the *A Nation at Risk* report are any indication of governmental actions that must be scanned, then every principal and her or his local school planners must be prepared to act quickly and effectively to implement the myriad of mandates emanating from sources outside the building. Other considerations are the laws related to education of the handicapped, vocational education, and such health and safety matters as asbestos removal.

• *Miscellaneous data related specifically to the school building* are also important. The local building planners and decisionmakers must scan these data over time, project them into the future, and devise action plans to meet the identified needs.

If there is vacant land within the school's attendance boundaries, it is crucial to discover whether it is zoned for commercial, single family, or multiple family housing use. If condominiums are being constructed, it is crucial to determine whether or not children will be permitted. If single family homes are being built, it is important to find out the selling price of the homes, as very

expensive homes on large lots are usually sold to older adults or to adults with older school-aged children.

Each type of construction will identify different future needs that must be addressed by the local school building planners.

What's the Message?

The message is very simple: either administrators and their planners can live day-to-day or they can gather useful data that will help them plan for future needs.

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Strategies for Faculty Involvement in Effective Schools

By Ted Garten and Jerry Valentine

Effective instructional leadership depends on the principal's success in involving the faculty members in developing a shared vision of where the school should head and agreement on the procedures to move toward those goals.

Different schools and different principals with different faculty members cannot be expected to follow the same procedures as they strive for an effective school. Following are three strategies designed to involve faculty members in effective schooling.

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Strategy One: Use Current and Upcoming Opportunities Regularly and Fully

Classroom supervision provides the opportunity for regular post-observation conferences with teachers. With a little extra effort, the principal can extend the value of these conferences beyond improvement of classroom instruction, to include systematic information gathering regarding teachers' instructional/academic concerns about the school. Three steps are offered as a workable procedure.

First, toward the end of a post-observation conference, the principal asks the teacher to share any instructional concerns the teacher may have. In doing so, the principal encourages a schoolwide focus and explains that the purpose is to isolate commonly held concerns so means for improvement can be devised. As the teacher responds, the principal avoids agreeing, disagreeing, or becoming defensive. The role of the principal is to seek clarification of the teacher's concerns.

Second, the principal records the concern or suggestion. Sample concerns might be as individualistic as "cafeteria noise making it impossible to teach effectively in my classroom," or as comprehensive as "our students do not write well enough."

Third, the principal uses the list of all concerns expressed by the teachers to develop a list of priorities. This significant step contributes to the development of that shared vision that is essential to long-range progress in the school.

The principal might work with a faculty advisory committee to review and clarify the list, expand the list if necessary, and then submit it to the faculty members so they may rank-order the concerns. This process should result in a "target list" for school improvement based on the perceptions of those closest to the students' needs. By using the post-observation conferences to gather the initial ideas, the principal has efficiently generated items and concerns that might not have otherwise surfaced and processed those ideas and concerns with the assistance of the faculty advisory committee.

Strategy Two: Build Your Faculty Members' Knowledge of Effective Schools/ Teaching Research and Their Skill in Better Identifying It in Their Teaching

The effective schools research, central to the professional lives of all educators today, forms the theoretical and research base for school improvement plans in school systems across the country. However, many teachers still have not had the opportunity to thoroughly study the literature and its applications to instruction in their classroom.

Principals have a tendency to rush past the attitude development and move directly into the staff development process.

Firsthand knowledge of this research can be reassuring to the competent teacher, can offer ideas for valid professional growth, and can help teachers understand what is expected of them. This knowledge also allays feelings that the proposed reforms have no substance and are being promoted by people far removed from the learning process.

The following process is suggested for faculty members and principals to use to improve knowledge and application of the research on effective schools and effective teaching. The procedure requires a well-informed instructional leader and an accurate summary of the research that has been written for use by the practitioner. Compilations of such summaries are readily available through most professional organizations, professional publications, educational research services, state departments of education, or regional educational laboratories.

The principal might begin the process with a short presentation to the faculty members about the research and what a careful examination of it can do for the faculty members and the school. Inform the faculty that the research offers a measuring stick to check current practice—a check that will undoubtedly offer considerable reinforcement for the good practices already occurring and at the same time provide ideas for improvement.Explain that examining the research will help them understand educational reform plans and reassure the community that a professional effort is being made to deliver the best education for the students. The presentation could be made by the principal or a guest speaker. This presentation might be concluded with reference to proposed plans for application of the research.

At a later faculty meeting of no more than 30 minutes, explain the procedures to be used in examining the research. Also explain that everyone is being asked to examine their classroom practice in light of these research-based recommendations. The principal might distribute research-based articles on classroom instruction and give a brief overview of the articles. Teachers could be asked to read selected articles and identify the items they already implement and those they should consider adding to their skills.

During the next few weeks, expect teachers to identify and experiment with the most useful research ideas. Discuss the ideas with individual teachers whenever possible. Eventually, have followup sessions to discuss classroom applications in small group meetings. From these sessions those recommendations that merit immediate attention of all faculty members could be compiled into a "Commitment to Apply" document. This document should be discussed with all staff members and should be shared with any building committees for instructional improvement. A Curriculum and Instructional Improvement Committee can function as a clearinghouse for ideas and support base for instructional changes.

The steps in this strategy can be repeated at appropriate intervals using additional selected readings.

Strategy Three: Practical Ideas on Staff Development/Inservice

Effective staff development occurs because of adherence to several basic issues. Faculty members must be encouraged to develop and articulate a philosophy that, in effect, says "I am confident that I am a competent professional. A central part of that competence lies in my belief and attitude that I must either grow or stagnate professionally. To maintain status quo is to regress. I can and must continue to grow. My colleagues and I are capable of finding ways to become even better. If we are to be respected as a profession, we must examine recommended research findings and give careful attention to appropriate application of these in our school setting. The pub-

lic will not, and should not, tolerate professionals who continue to conduct unexamined practices which research does not support."

As part of this "attitude" development, the principal and faculty members might examine the different reactions individuals and groups typically have to change—ranging from hostile rejection to blanket acceptance. Professional educators must understand that discomfort with change is a very normal, healthy reaction.

Principals have a tendency to rush past the attitude development and move directly into the staff development process. Unfortunately, too often staff development has been a matter of enduring a presentation at the beginning of the year and another in the middle of the year, followed by no assistance with, or expectation of, application in the classroom. Such experiences, plus a host of other factors, seem to have established negative mindsets about staff development and diminished the value some educators place on lifelong professional learning. Positive attitude development about inservice is essential.

As a receptive attitude emerges, the staff members are ready for the first step—needs assessment. Effective inservice begins with a need. This need may come from outside the school or from within the school. The faculty, or a representative group of faculty members, should participate in the identification and rank ordering of needs and the planning of the full staff development process. This faculty participation can take many different forms, but each school must find a legitimate way to involve faculty members if the staff development efforts are to lead to school improvement.

Suggestions for Building-Level Faculty Committees

Effective schools are characterized today by clearly defined goals; climates of belonging and pride; effective leadership; effective instruction; and decision making based on relevant data. To promote the development of these characteristics, staff input into the operation and direction of a school should be systematic and obvious.

Two distinctive building-level committees, representing all school personnel, may help meet these needs. A curriculum and instruction committee may address issues related to the instructional program. An administrative advisory committee can be useful in addressing issues related to managerial and procedural operations within the school.

Input from these two types of committees should be an integral part of the decision-making process used by school administrators during the school year. These two types of committees can play a significant role by assisting with the schools' annual goal-setting process; by assisting the principal (and other administrators) in defining inservice needs; by clarifying instructional needs; and by improving communication and cooperation among all staff members.

Following is a brief description of how such building-level committees may be organized effectively, along with suggestions for their composition and responsibilities.

Administrative Advisory Council (AAC)

Titles: Various titles may be used to describe the Administrative Advisory Council concept. Typical names include: Teacher Advisory Council, School Operations Committee, School Problems Committee, Rules and Procedures Committee, Administrator Council, and Principal's Council.

Purpose: The AAC is designed to allow for faculty member input into the daily operations of the school. Following is a typical statement of purpose for this type of committee: "Throughout the school year, numerous problems arise that have implications for the professional staff members and the overall school program. The AAC functions so that the thoughts of the professional staff members may be adequately and clearly expressed to the administration."

Responsibilities: Following are a few examples of the responsibilities of a typical AAC:

- Determine the feelings of the staff members about managerial procedural issues through discussions with staff members and surveys of their attitudes about specific issues.
- Interpret the feelings and views of the staff members to the administration on a regular basis.
- Make specific recommendations to the administration regarding significant concerns.
- Assist the administration, as appropriate, in the resolution of problems and concerns.
- Conduct an annual "school climate survey," including, but not limited to, management and procedural issues.
- Assist the administration in identifying school goals.

Membership: Membership of the AAC should be representative of the total faculty. Administrators typically are not members of the committee. Most committees meet without the administration to allow for frank discussion. Then, the chairman or the committee as a whole meets with the principal to discuss issues. The number of persons on the committee should be proportionate to the size of the faculty. A committee probably should not be smaller than 5 nor larger than 12 members.

Outcomes: For this committee structure to be effective, the administration must believe that the faculty has the best interests of the school at heart, and that the faculty's collective opinion is valuable. Except when the committee's suggestions would violate policy, most recommendations from the group should be addressed. This approach increases the worth of the committee, gives the faculty members a sense of "belonging," and encourages the growth of a collegial spirit among teachers and administrators. Because several heads are better than one, a strong AAC should promote more effective school management.

Note: An AAC is not a substitute for effective leadership; its goal should be to enhance effective leadership. The principal does not abdicate responsibility to the faculty committee, but simply involves them in matters that directly affect them and the school. The issues addressed by the committee should be those that directly affect staff, students, and the school environment. The committee makes suggestions/recommendations—not decisions. An AAC should not be viewed as a process of "management by committee," but as a process of school improvement through committee involvement.

Instructional Improvement Council (IIC)

Titles: Titles used to describe an Instructional Improvement Council include, but are not limited to: Curriculum Committee, Curriculum and Instruction Committee, Instructional Council, Needs Assessment and Evaluation Council.

Purpose: The IIC provides faculty member input into the curricular and instructional aspects of the school. A typical statement of purpose for this type of committee might be: "The IIC provides for coordination, facilitation, and evaluation of the ongoing curricular and instructional program in order to ensure the most effective instructional environment for students."

Responsibilities: A few examples of responsibilities for a typical IIC are:

- Determine the inservice needs of the faculty members; make recommendations for the development of appropriate programs to meet those needs; assist in planning and implementing such programs
- Assess curricular needs; evaluate current curricular offerings and proposed curricular changes; make recommendations regarding curricular programs
- Review current instructional-level objectives, and make recommendations regarding changes and evaluation procedures
- Analyze student achievement on criterion-referenced and standardized tests; make recommendations for program improvement as appropriate
- Review supervisory and evaluative procedures and needs; make recommendations for change as appropriate.

Membership: Membership of the committee should represent the faculty by instructional divisions (grade levels or teams at the elementary or middle levels; department or content areas at the middle or high school levels). The instructional materials center and the counseling staff members also should be represented. The principal or assistant principal should be an ex-officio member, attending all meetings and providing input, but not voting. Suggestions from the committee go to the principal for action; thus, the administration need not provide official input at the council level. The number of persons on the committee should be proportionate to the size of the faculty and the number of instructional divisions. An approximate ratio of 1 member per 8 teachers is typical, with an overall committee no smaller than 5 nor larger than 12 members.

Outcomes: The ultimate goal of an IIC is to provide improved learning for students. All issues addressed by the committee should be based on what is instructionally best for students. Most suggestions from the committee should be supported by the administration. This enhances the value of the committee, strengthens the faculty's sense of ownership, and promotes a collegial spirit among faculty and administration.

Note: This committee structure is not a substitute for effective leadership; its goal should be to enhance effective leadership. The principal does not abdicate responsibility to the faculty members, but simply involves them in matters that directly affect them and the school. The council makes "suggestions/recommendations" to the administration—not decisions. An IIC should not be viewed as a process of "management by committee," but as a process of school improvement through committee involvement.

Perspective

The role of instructional leader may be the most satisfying of all the principal's roles. Most principals entered the profession as teachers with a strong interest in teaching and helping students learn. The instructional leadership role brings the principal back to that highly valued function. Each of the above strategies, modified to fit the style and personality of the principal and school, can enhance the principal's image as an instructional leader. But more important, the strategies can promote better teaching, and better education for our students.

Decentralized School-Site Budgeting: Some Guidelines

By Harry J. Hartley

The decade of the 1990s will produce greater decentralization of education via a concept that empowers principals, teachers, parents, and community members: school-based management (SBM).

A key component of SBM is school-site budgeting (SSB), which defines each school as a cost center. If implemented properly, SSB enables a principal to:

- Establish instructional priorities for the school
- Seek advice from teachers and parents concerning budget requests
- Submit a comprehensive site budget request to the central office
- Administer the approved budget in a way that enhances pupil performance and builds community consensus.

However, as popular as SSB is with some principals, it is not welcome in all school systems. Table 1 provides a concise list of the advantages and disadvantages of this decentralized approach to budgeting.

I have met some principals who are convinced that their superintendents do not know how to implement SSB properly. Other principals have told me they fear either they will be forced to surrender their authority to teachers and parents, or they may be held to an unrealistic degree of accountability.

Although both concerns are valid, the compelling educational advantage of SSB is that it moves budget decision making closer to where the students are. In this era of retrenchment, it is particularly important that the instructional needs of the students be the primary concern in budget deliberations.

When a school decides to implement SSB, the board of education should determine what and why, the superintendent should specify who and where, and the principal should choose who and when it will be completed. A summary of the role of principals in budgeting is offered in Table 2.

The role of the principal becomes more important as local school districts face stiff funding competition from other mandated public services, such as prisons, welfare, health, and youth services, and many schools are receiving a smaller slice of the revenue pie.

The following steps provide a simple, effective process for administrators to use when they must cut the school budget. The first four steps apply primarily to superintendents; the other six steps relate directly to secondary school principals. Overall, the strategy incorporates school-based management concepts.

Budget Reduction: The Basic Game Plan

1. Make "worst case" and "probable case" revenue estimates.

In planning for the next fiscal year, it is important to be both pessimistic and realistic in making your projections of revenues that will be available to the schools. Estimates that are overly optimistic lead to last-minute panic when cuts must be made.

You should start with two different revenue estimates. The first is the "worst possible case," and this is a painfully low figure. The second revenue estimate is the "most probable case," which entails an educated guess of what will be the actual level of local and state funding for the district.

The major challenge in budgeting is to develop a tentative alternative expenditure plan for next year that will reduce spending to a level equal to the "worst possible case." We hope the superintendent will not have to submit this minimum funding level as an actual request, but if the need arises, this worst-case budget will have been developed in a panic-free atmosphere.

2. Organize essential data in an executive summary form.

The need for accurate and complete data is even greater during retrenchment. Fiscal errors committed under pressure in public sessions can destroy the credibility of the administration. Most districts have much data available, but the crucial information required during budget deliberations is not available in a concise, crisp format.

The key is to organize essential data in an executive summary form that is neatly indexed and easy to interpret. Examples of data needed

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Table 1

Decentralized School-Site Budgeting

Advantages

- Emphasizes decentralized, building-level accountability
- Increases staff involvement in budget planning
- Enhances authority and stature of the principal
- Allows more flexibility in achieving school goals
- Promotes an atmosphere of healthy competition
- Makes budgeting more realistic, less of a charade
- Encourages experimentation in programs, staffing, purchasing
- Reduces arbitrary decisions by the central administration
- Generates parent support for each school's budget
- Reduces inequities in per pupil expenditures among schools
- Clarifies responsibilities and performance evaluation of staff
- Moves budget decisions much closer to students

Disadvantages

- Supports concept of separate schools instead of single school system
- Pits teacher against teacher in recommending staff cuts
- Allows central administrators to delegate excessive responsibility
- Enables community pressure groups to influence principal's decisions
- May result in principal being made convenient scapegoat
- Requires fiscal expertise that many principals do not possess
- Promotes undesirable inter-school competition among principals
- Tends to support fragmentation at expense of long-range planning
- May create problems in districtwide collective bargaining provisions
- Places higher priority on fiscal limits than curricular needs

are: enrollment and staffing (past, present, and future projections), budget history, course offerings, legal mandates, facilities data, pupil data (test scores, dropouts, at-risk pupils), staffing ratios, and time-item cost details.

3. *Establish a Budget Advisory Committee.*

The superintendent should consider creating a committee to assist in developing next year's budget request. Although there is always some risk that a budget committee might become divisive, the advantages of getting advice from a variety of staff members generally outweigh the disadvantages.

In creating a new committee, the following basic steps should be followed:

- Describe its purpose in writing
- Identify the membership
- Select the chairperson
- Indicate the limited authority of this advisory body
- Determine the frequency and format of meetings
- Specify the date when the committee will conclude its work and be terminated.

This committee, consisting of central office staff members, building administrators, and teachers, should systematically review the budget and identify program elements that are excessively costly, duplicative, or marginally desirable in light of the current fiscal climate. It might also examine staffing patterns, course enrollments, organizational structures, non-instructional services, and specific criteria used to make budget decisions.

The end product would be a series of suggestions for reducing costs that are taken under advisement by the superintendent.

4. *Consider broad areas of possible districtwide cuts.*

Before proposing specific staff cuts or individual program reductions, it is useful to consider whether there are any districtwide areas where savings could be achieved. Examples of cuts actually made by some districts this year include:

- Impose a deferred maintenance program for buildings
- Reduce total staffing by 5 percent via attrition
- Reorganize grades and close one school
- Reduce new and replacement equipment purchases
- Eliminate all out-of-state staff travel
- Reduce capital budget requests by 20 percent
- Restrict pupil transportation to minimum legal distance
- Eliminate all overtime payments
- Reduce staff development costs by 20 percent
- Increase average class size by two pupils.

5. *Compile a comprehensive list of possible budget cuts (hit list).*

The most difficult and challenging part of retrenchment planning is for the administrator to prepare a quasi-confidential "hit list" of potential budget savings of any type. Table 3 displays a list adapted from a local school district.

Table 2

Role of Principals in Resource Management

Budget Planning

- Assists the superintendent in identifying budget priorities and assumptions
- Suggests ways to improve budget process, forms, hearings, documents
- Conducts preliminary planning with department heads and supervisors
- Suggests ways to inform community of resource needs

Program Analysis

- Coordinates preparation of program objectives and evaluation criteria
- Evaluates educational programs in terms of stated objectives
- Communicates with staff, students, and parents about programs
- Suggests curriculum changes and resource needs
- Supervises staff and monitors overall performance

Budget Requesting

- Provides budget request forms and directions for teachers
- Reviews and analyzes teachers' requests
- Sets program priorities and cost estimates
- Submits budget request and justification for the building
- Informs teachers of disposition of budget requests

Expenditure Control

- Maintains proper accounting of expenditures and balances
- Maintains an inventory of equipment, texts, and supplies
- Submits requisitions and/or purchase orders
- Works with teachers to ensure efficient use of limited resources
- Meets central office deadlines for submission of forms and requests
- Maintains a list of possible budget reduction options
- Introduces cost reduction programs in areas such as energy or equipment

Table 3

List of Potential Budget Cuts

Item #	Program	Staff	Savings
1	Summer School Program, HS	—	$145,000
2	District Program Leaders	(13)	90,000
3	After School Program	(1)	460,000
4	Alternate Program, HS	(10.6)	540,000
5	Cluster Program, MS	—	280,000
6	Custodian Overtime	—	165,000
7	AP Exam Courses	(3)	45,000
8	Extraordinary Learner Program	(5)	110,000
9	New Arrival Center	—	95,000
10	Interscholastic Athletics, HS	—	493,000
11	Language Arts (HS Writing)	(2)	86,000
12	Vocational Agriculture	(1)	28,000
13	Summer School, Pre-K-8	—	173,780

Note: for each of these items, a one-page budget reduction option form should be prepared. See Table 4 for an analysis of Item #13.

The initial purpose of this type of list is to provide the central staff with a framework for analyzing each option and determining the feasibility of cutting all or a portion of each program on the list. Suggestions for items on the list may come from anyone in the district.

Some suggestions will be frivolous and easily rejected, while others will be imaginative and useful to consider. Instructional as well as non-instructional services should be considered.

6. *Calculate the impact of each budget reduction option.*

Each item included on the "hit list" should be analyzed in terms of its potential impact on pupils, staffing, curriculum, legal and contractual compliance, and budget savings. Table 4 provides an example of a budget reduction option form that was prepared for item #13 on the "hit list."

The idea here is for the central staff to prepare a concise, one-page impact statement for each option on the "hit list." This helps ensure that all items considered by the superintendent have been analyzed comprehensively and accurately by instructional, fiscal, and personnel administrators.

This approach minimizes errors and enhances the concept of team management.

7. *Specify what criteria are used in making budget decisions.*

What factors should be considered when making budget cuts? It is important during the review of budget options that the administration consider as many relevant factors as possible: impact on pupils, labor contracts, legal requirements, board policies, political factors, etc.

Table 5 lists 15 criteria that are used in making budget decisions. This budget decision criteria instrument was used in several doctoral dissertations to determine how superintendents and principals differ in making budget decisions. We found that superintendents ranked "labor contracts" and "state laws" as the two most important factors they consider, whereas high school principals ranked "number of pupils affected" and "school board policies" as the two most crucial criteria.

8. *Prepare a rank-order list of potential budget cuts.*

After you have developed the "hit list" of possible options, calculated the fiscal-personnel-instructional-legal implications of each option, and specified criteria you are using, the next step is to compile a list of potential budget cuts to be recommended to the board. In terms of format, this list will be very similar to the "hit list" shown in Table 3. However, this list contains actual recommendations and has documentation to support each item on the list.

9. *Display the total budget request by objects, programs, and sites.*

When the desired bottom-line figure has been achieved, it is recommended that a summary of

the total budget request be displayed to the board and public in three different ways:

- Object Budget: salaries, benefits, supplies, equipment
- Program Budget: art, math, science, maintenance
- Site Budget: operating costs of each school or site.

Each of these formats can be summarized in one of two pages; the intent is to reveal how budget cuts actually affect objects, programs, and schools.

10. Conduct staff and public budget hearings.

The two most controversial retrenchment activities are staff reductions and program eliminations. Some of the more palatable methods of reducing staff include attrition without replacement, early retirement plans, increased pupil-teacher ratios, and elimination of non-tenured faculty. Program offerings should reflect legal mandates, needs assessments, accreditation priorities, and student demand.

When the administration feels satisfied that it has developed the best budget possible within existing fiscal constraints, it should conduct staff meetings and public budget hearings with the board.

An excellent way to prepare for these hearings is for the superintendent and staff to identify the "20 toughest budget questions" and to prepare accurate responses during mock hearings (Hartley, 1990). Examples of rehearsal questions include:

- Why is the proposed increase twice as much as the rate of inflation?
- How much of the budget goes for administrative costs?
- What staff reductions and program cuts are proposed?
- How much will local property taxes increase?

The purpose of the rehearsal is to anticipate the public's concerns, provide honest and com-

Table 4

Budget Reduction Option Form

Item # 13
Savings $173,780

Option: Eliminate the following program: SUMMER SCHOOL, PRE-K-8

Description: This program provides support instruction for approximately 400 students in primary (Pre-K to 3) and intermediate grades (4 to 8) during a four-week summer session. It supports classes in reading, math, and ESL. The proposed reduction does not include the High School Summer Program.

Impact: Elimination of this support program will directly affect "at-risk" students who benefit greatly from the summer instruction. This program contributes to the board of education's adopted theme of "Success for All." Cutting the program may prevent several hundred at-risk students from achieving academic success and may increase the dropout rate.

Personnel: No positions will be cut; object #109 (part-time professional salaries) will be reduced.

Legal: This program is not required by law. There are no contractual implications.

Fiscal:

Code:

100 - $106,000
200 - $0
300 - $4,250
400 - $0
500 - $40,500
600 - $22,880
700 - $0
800 - $150

Total - $173,780

Table 5

Budget Decision Criteria: 15 Factors

1. Number of clients affected—analysis of program enrollments, class size, cost per pupil
2. Collective bargaining contract provisions—expenditures specified in bargaining agreement
3. Impact of matching funds—interdependence of local spending pattern and federal matching funds
4. Administrator's judgment and intuition—professional judgment, personal experience, and individual style
5. Governing board fiscal policies—priorities, policies, and goals of board of education
6. State and federal laws and regulations—programs and activities required by government agencies
7. Non-client expenditures—instructional vs. non-instructional areas, e.g., deferred maintenance
8. National and regional curricular trends—factors that influence curricular programs and staffing patterns
9. Internal-organizational political pressures—demands by board of education, staff members, and students
10. External-community political pressures—demands by specific interest groups and citizen action groups
11. Staff recommendation and/or needs assessment—reports from advisory bodies and study groups; informal advice
12. Past practice and local tradition—continuation of programs because of local tradition
13. Program quality and evaluation results—relationship between program costs and program accomplishments
14. Accreditation standards—formal recommendations concerning staffing, programs, and facilities
15. Principle of least opposition—decisions least likely to create controversy

plete answers, and maintain a high level of credibility during the fiscal crunch.

Conclusion

By their very nature, secondary schools are difficult to manage under the best conditions. But in an era of retrenchment, the management programs are more severe and visible. We can observe the rise of gamesmanship, self-interest groups lobbying against proposed cuts, decline in staff morale, distrust leading to personal attacks, and the principal facing the lonely task of choosing among some very unpopular budget reduction options.

However, when decremental budgeting replaces incremental budgeting, the principal must employ a rational and comprehensive strategy for reducing costs. That strategy should include participation by school faculty and staff members. The management team should not leave itself vulnerable to the criticism that it used poor procedures. Even though people may disagree with individual budget decisions, they are much less likely to fault the budget process.

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